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WHO OWNS OMNIPOTENCE?

THE Soviet declaration of war on Japan followed immediately the news that Hiroshima, with some 200,000 people in it, has been "obliterated" in an instant by a single atomic bomb. The first reflection is that the Japanese can scarcely hold out for long. Already the Russians, by invading Manchuria, are destroying any Japanese hopes of a long resistance on the Asiatic mainland, while the American Command, determined apparently to reinforce the "lesson" of Hiroshima, has dropped a second bomb on Nagasaki. We learn that the Emperor Hirohito vainly attempted to persuade Stalin to mediate with his Western Allies; the result was a reiteration of the unconditional surrender formula amplified in the terms of the ultimatum from Potsdam. As we write, news of an impending "special transmission" by Japanese radio raises hopes that capitulation may be announced. If so, it will be arguable that two bombs, by obviating the need for invasion, may on balance have saved life. But if these hopes are not fulfilled, it should be remembered, before more bombs are dropped, that it is easy to achieve by destruction a degree of disorganisation in which no responsible authority is left to offer surrender.

The Russian declaration of war raises issues of political, as well as military, import. It has long been clear that the U.S.S.R. would at some point enter the Far Eastern war, and details (if not the exact timing) were clearly discussed at Potsdam, following the Moscow discussions between Stalin and T. V. Soong, which are now renewed. They involve the conditions of Russia's entry into the war and the whole future of Asia, since China is confronted with the fact that both the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. are now interested in the quarrel between the Kuomingtang and the Chinese Communists and the strategic and economic future of Manchuria. Even more important for the world, however, is the fact that, if Russia and America are now fighting Allies in Asia, the chances of real and not fake collaboration between them in the future government of the world is greatly increased. For the release of atomic energy for war purposes has brought it home to everyone, not totally devoid of moral or political sense, that now, without cavil or quibble, the choice is really between destruction and World Government.

Let us immediately cease using such misleading phrases as "the choice before mankind." For mankind means, to-day, Truman, Attlee, Stalin and a number of other important politicians, soldiers and experts in war and production. It includes publicists and their publics only in so far as by expressing our general attitude we can influence those who make great decisions. The essential decisions themselves must be made by very few people, and made very soon.

So far, the peacetime uses of the release of atomic energy have not been developed. We have an atomic bomb made at a cost which is prohibitive for all but a very few countries, and by a combined effort of scientific knowledge and industrial organisation which cannot be achieved outside the United States, the British Commonwealth and the Soviet Union. The Germans were approaching a solution, but fortunately the Allies outpaced them, and now hold all their secrets. The Russians are on the track, and will no doubt be in a position to produce atomic bombs within a few years. At the moment the United States, with the British Commonwealth in partnership, is alone in possessing this new form of destructive power. Thus it is still true that the new coercive power in the world is concentrated in three great nations, but that for the time being Russia is in a weaker bargaining position than the other two.

Mr. Truman, Sir John Anderson and, indeed, every responsible person who has pronounced on this subject, refers to the necessity of international control of atomic bombs. That clearly should be one of the chief tasks of the Security Council. There are two courses, one wise and the other foolish. The foolish, and easy one, is for the Anglo-Saxon nations to use their present bargaining position to withhold any share in the knowledge or the control of the atomic bomb from the Soviet Union and other members of the Security Council, and to use this bargaining power to threaten Russia and win concessions from her. The inevitable result in the U.S.S.R. would be a great increase in suspicion, a growing resentment, a firmer resolution to equal the United States in scientific development, followed, in a few years' time, by the development of atomic power within Soviet territory. In a word, it would be a short-sighted policy leading inevitably to the catastrophe we all dread.

The second policy, which we presume Mr. Truman has in mind when he speaks of international control, is to use this bargaining position to make a reality of the World Security Council. That can now be attempted far more hopefully than ever before, because for the first time the atomic bomb creates an effective form of international police. If the place, or places, in which atomic bombs are made come under the control of the combined military staffs of Britain, Russia and America—that is, the promised coercive instrument of the Security Council—then it will really be true that the members of the Security Council will have individually given up the right and the capacity to wage private wars. True, the difficult problem remains of deciding where bomb-producing plants are to be located. Would they be "safe" in the territory of *any* sovereign state? It is a hopeful sign that America is talking of creating an international area to be leased to the new World Organisation. If production is concentrated exclusively there, and control both of manufacture and raw material supplies entrusted to the sole responsibility of a new model Combined Chiefs of Staff, with adequate international forces to protect the plant, it will be seen that most of the present armaments of the world are out of date. Certainly tanks and vast conscripted armies and naval bases will be rapidly wasting assets in a world which contains a single striking force capable of destroying any private army or military or naval or aerial installation. If our rulers make this great decision now and share the secrets and the control of atomic bomb-making among the members of Combined Staffs, representing the chief Powers on the Security Council, then war will really begin to look like a nightmare of the past, and the peacetime potentialities of atomic release can be developed without the fear that everything useful they create may be destroyed overnight.

Mr. Attlee's Team

The Prime Minister has been cautious but shrewd in his choice of colleagues. The average age of the Cabinet is high, and even the junior appointments indicate a preference for experienced parliamentarians rather than untried talent. It may well be that Mr. Attlee has thought it wisest in most cases to give "old hands" a chance to review the Departments, before embarking on any radical changes in the structure of his Administration; and in his Beaver Hall speech he emphasised that his initial selection of Ministers would be provisional. In the life of this House of Commons there should be plenty of time and opportunity for promotions; and it is significant that in several Departments, where the choice of Minister seems uninspired, the burden of the portfolio is lightened by the selection of a young and vigorous Under-Secretary. In the case of the Service Ministers the appointments clearly reflect determination that Servicemen's welfare and interests shall be studied. At the Admiralty, where Mr. Alexander resumes his war-time office as First Lord, Mr. Edwards, the new Civil Lord, is the first holder of that appointment to have had first-hand experience of life on the lower deck. The War Office team, consisting of Mr. Lawson, Mr. Bellenger and Lord Nathan, will deal sympathetically with the individual problems of the soldier. But will they have the stature to deal adequately either with the manifold political issues involved in the Military Government of Germany, or with the major policy decisions on the nature of our post-war army? At the Air Ministry, Mr. Strachey, as Under-Secretary to Lord Stansgate, will have a chance to show that his ability, well-tried in publicity, extends to administration. Mr. Parker, at the Dominions Office, and Mr. Creech-Jones at the Colonial Office, are two other strong Under-Secretaries.

Personalities and Policy

When the make-up of the Government is studied from the angle of policy priorities, it is clear that Mr. Attlee has concentrated much of his talent on foreign affairs (including commercial relationships) and the reconversion of industry. At the Foreign Office, Mr. Bevin, Mr. Noel-Baker and Mr. McNeil will be a strong team. In the industrial sphere, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Ellis Smith at the Board of Trade should work in well with Mr. Shinwell at the Ministry of Fuel and Power, and Mr. Wilmot at the Ministry of Supply. At the Department of Overseas Trade, Professor Marquand, an exceptionally able expert, will be the link between industrial and foreign policy; and, to complete the "economic" team, there is Mr. Dalton, in control of Treasury credit policy, and Mr. George Isaacs, who brings to the crucial problem of man-power the authority and experience gained as chairman of the T.U.C. General Council. This looks like being an effective and durable combination. Can the same be said of Housing, on whose success the Government's fate depends? What of the Labour Party's declaration, last April, in favour of a combined Ministry of Housing and Planning? To the Ministry of Health, Mr. Bevan brings drive and resolution and also experience in handling doctors, and we take it that this will be his peculiar field. But he will have a big part to play in house-construction, together with Mr. Silkin and Mr. Tomlinson who take over "Planning" and "Works," respectively. Even though the task of co-ordination of functions is, apparently, assigned to Mr. Greenwood, the handicap of three over-lapping Departments remains.

Food for Europe

The meeting of the Council of Unrra in London is a reminder, if one were needed, that the provision of food and fuel for Europe in the coming winter is the gravest of all our international problems. The first question that has to be faced is finance. Unrra deals only with Eastern Europe and Italy: it has no responsibility for our Western Allies or for Germany. The needs of this restricted area are, none the less, so great that its funds will be exhausted by the end of the year, and this is without reckoning the heavy claims presented by Russia and China—claims whose satisfaction is properly a matter for the British and American Treasuries, not Unrra's limited budget. In any case, it is obvious that the amount by which those of the United Nations who escaped occupation taxed themselves (one per cent. of their total revenues) was wholly inadequate and must be increased. Another matter on which Sir Arthur Salter has insisted is that a single authoritative Council should be created, which can survey and compare the relative needs of the many suffering peoples and establish an order of priority. Could the Council of the five Foreign Secretaries set up at Potsdam develop an economic commission as one of its own organs? But to our thinking, what is wanted first of all is rather an authority which can override the military and naval commands of the chief Allies. Even more urgently than food Europe needs trucks with which to transport it. Of these the armies possess an immense unutilised surplus. Instructions should go out at once from the White House and Downing Street, which will bring it home to the High Commands that their first duty is to-day to use all the resources at their command, especially lorries and ships, for the transport of food and to pour their superfluous stocks into the common pool. What Lord Wavell did in Bengal, when he set the army to fight the famine, should be repeated in Europe.

Education and Culture

The proposed Educational and Cultural Organisation of the United Nations, for which preliminary plans have just been published, is the destined successor of the old League Institute for Intellectual Co-operation, which, with excellent intentions, was able to accomplish very little. The new body will, at any rate, have the advantage of full recognition as one of the "specialised bodies" which are to radiate round the Economic and Social Council of U.N.O. The draft plan, to be amended and, one hopes, accepted by a special Conference of the United Nations due to meet in London in November, gives some hope that the educational side may at last be taken seriously. There is obvious advantage in the regular exchange of teachers, the provision of teachers (including technical teachers) for economically and socially backward areas, and the promotion of direct education in the principles and practice of international citizenship. But the new body simply cannot work well unless the nations represented on it are prepared to encourage their peoples to move freely and to get to know one another as persons instead of doing all they can to make travel and cultural exchanges difficult. To some extent, this problem is tied up with that of money; for men and women cannot travel freely unless they can get foreign money to pay for their travels. Cannot we have, even if foreign exchange is tight for some time to come, some system of releasing cash on a mutual basis to enable us to visit freely one another's countries?

The Next Step in India

If a Secretary for India had to be appointed, the choice of Mr. Pethick-Lawrence was a good one, for he has long taken an active interest in Indian freedom. He may be trusted, moreover, to grasp the vital economic issue of Indian poverty. But it was a disappointment that Indian affairs were not at once transferred to the Dominions Office, as Mr. Bevin proposed at the Blackpool Conference. This would have been understood by Indians as a proof of our intention to bring our direct rule over their country to an end. The first and obvious step is to release the rest of the political prisoners and lift the ban on the activities of Congress. All those whose detention is on grounds of opinion should be set at once released. What is to be the next step towards self-government? The undeserved failure of Lord Wavell's initiative suggests to us that it might be wise to look for a way of by-passing the political parties. The obvious method is to get self-government going again in the provinces, most of which (including Bengal) are under bureaucratic rule. Congress is now disposed to form ministries in the provinces it dominates on a footing of coalition with the Muslim League. A General Election would test the League's claim to speak for the whole Muslim community. It would then be possible to call the provincial premiers into conference. They might more readily than the parties, reach agreement in nominating a National Government for the interim period. Their help might also be sought for the selection of a Commission charged with drafting the future constitution. The Cripps offer suggested a Constituent Assembly indirectly elected by the provincial councils.

Procès Pétain

The Pétain procès, as we expected, has developed into a political debate. Valuable as a source-book for the history of 1940, the trial bears little resemblance to judicial proceedings. On the one hand, a succession of ex-Premiers, Blum, Daladier and Reynaud, have been accorded the satisfaction of washing their (more or less clean) linen in public; on the other, the court has been treated to an unrepentant apologia from Laval who succeeded in conveying the impression that his policy, from the pact with Hoare to the famous 1942 broadcast "desiring" German victory, derived from the respectable motives of pacifism and love of France. Taken together, the depositions of the military witnesses for the defence—Generals Lacaille, Picaudard and Lafarque—support the view that Pétain did, in fact, try during 1941-42 to ride two horses at once. That is, he re-insured against the possibility (remote, as he thought) of German defeat by conniving at the concealment of arms for the Resistance. The prosecution has had little difficulty in establishing that collaboration was the overriding principle in his attitude. What it has, so far, failed to bring out with sufficient clarity is that, in siding with the enemy, Pétain's real objective was to consolidate French reaction in France.

A Political Cabinet for Greece?

Mr. Attlee's timely message to the Greek Regent, urging the suppression of extremist terrorism and the honest fulfilment of the Varkiza Agreement, may accelerate the replacement of the "Service" Cabinet of Admiral Voulgaris by a "Political" administration formed by the main Republican parties, which could ensure fair and properly conducted elections. The Regent has been interviewing the leaders of the main parties, doubtless trying to discover which groups are prepared to work with each other. Though he is certain to refuse the offer to form a Cabinet made by the Communist leader, M. Siantos, this gesture may be taken as an assurance that the Communists are willing to accept responsibility in a Coalition. The Communists have, at the same time, threatened to boycott the elections unless immediate steps are taken to end the reign of terror against the Left and to introduce an amnesty for all political prisoners. These are fair demands and this initiative is certain to be followed by similar demands from the other E.A.M. parties. The Communists are almost certainly right

demanding a Three-Power Commission to supervise the elections; but, in any case, the main responsibility is Britain's. British troops are now billeted throughout Greece; given the right directives they could be used as a guarantee of order and honesty in the election period.

Civil Air Policy

It is a pity, though not past mending, that the recent meeting of the Commonwealth Air Transport Council was held before new men took over in Whitehall. There is, of course, no chance at present of a world organisation to operate all air lines. In the United States even the idea of a single "chosen instrument," as proposed in the McCarran Bill, has been rejected; and the Civil Aeronautics Board is busy approving competitors to Pan-American Airways on a number of international routes. This does not mean, however, that there need be a competitive "free for all" within the British Commonwealth, or that the possibility of efficient co-operation between the United Kingdom and most, at any rate, of the Dominions is ruled out. The conference in London resulted in a most unsatisfactory compromise between free competition and pooling. On the air route between the U.K. and Canada there is to be "full and friendly competition"—a polite way of saying that there is no agreement at all. On other Dominion routes "frequencies" are to be divided on a 50–50 basis between the operators licensed by each Government—a system quaintly termed "parallel partnership." We trust that Lord Winster, who can rely on substantial support in this matter from Australia and New Zealand, will succeed in showing that an efficient substitute for wasteful competition can be evolved, at any rate within the Commonwealth, on the basis of public ownership.

Big Business in Films

The film production deals which Mr. J. Arthur Rank brought back from America dispose of any idea that he stands for a British school of filming. On the contrary, he has become a junior partner in American film capitalism: Denham and Pinewood will become offshoots of Hollywood. He has made a contract with R.K.O. by which this American company and the Rank Group will jointly produce two films a year in England, the Americans supplying one director, one producer, and some stars. A similar contract was made with Mr. David Selznick, the lavish producer of "Gone With the Wind." An earlier deal with United Artists provided for joint productions in Hollywood. Of course, these deals are designed partly to provide Mr. Rank with distribution in America and partly to fill the British quota requirements of American distributors. But at what cost to the art of British film-making? To make "entertaining films which can be understood by the American public" Mr. Rank thinks that we must choose "more international subjects" (Shakespeare is not international, we gather, for this purpose), or "treat some of our own subjects in such a way as to interest Americans." This suggests that what little individuality is left to British films will be taken away. What Mr. Rank has done by taking over two great cinema circuits, comprising about 550 theatres, is to put himself under the obligation to buy American films, good, bad or indifferent, to keep his screen time filled. In other words his interests as exhibitor are stronger than his interests as a national producer. Sir Stafford Cripps, the new President of the Board of Trade, might consider whether it is wise to allow one monopolist to have such power as to be the arbiter of British film taste or the judge of what films the British public should see. To keep the British art of film making alive it is imperative for the Government to retain its Crown Film units and put them to work on British documentaries, travelogues and cultural short films. And that requires a Government studio with space to let at cheap rentals to independent producers.

AFTER POTSDAM

To measure the success achieved at Potsdam it must be realised that there were two quite different points of conflict between the Russians and ourselves—the one long-term and political, the other short-term and economic. The Russians have never rid themselves of the fear that any reconstruction of Germany under Anglo-American leadership will, somehow or other, sooner or later, result in the formation of an anti-Bolshevik Bloc. Mr. Churchill's policy in Greece, Spain, and in regard to the London Poles—not to mention the episode of the Doenitz Government, which could hardly have been worse mismanaged—only strengthened these fears. The Russians, therefore, consistently refused to participate in any advance planning for Germany and developed their own unilateral policy both in the satellite countries—Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary—and in Austria and Germany itself. For the principles on which they based their occupation policy there was much to be said. But their method—the *fait accompli* without prior consultation—was bound to lead to the very thing they feared, the division of Europe and of Germany into a Western and an Eastern Bloc.

Aggravating this suspicion of long-term Anglo-American policy was the problem of reparations. Here there was a genuine conflict of interest. Russia, once her terrible war damage has been made good, will be an economically self-sufficient Power, with little interest in Western European trade. Her need is an immediate one—German machines and German labour at once; and her system of State planning ensures that she can digest them in very large quantities without economic dislocation. Britain, on the other hand, has small need of reparations in kind, but depends on a revived Europe—and with it a reconstructed Germany—as a market for her exports. The conflict was real; but, like all strictly economic conflicts, it was soluble by "give and take."

The Potsdam communique is a combination of a policy agreement and a business deal. In this respect it bears the marks of Mr. Bevin's handiwork. Indeed, it is an open secret that the new Foreign Secretary changed the atmosphere by his readiness to appreciate the Russian difficulties and to accept their claim to reparations in kind from Western Germany. He and Mr. Attlee have also refrained from pressing for a decision on the German-Polish frontier, in the hope that, once real collaboration between West and East has been achieved, a fairer settlement, both of the boundary and the population problem, can be arrived at than anything possible at the moment. In our view, they have been wise to base their policy on the firm conviction of the possibility of Russian collaboration. Russian good will—or, rather, a Russian belief in our good will sufficient to check Russia's tendency to isolationism and unilateral action—is a vital British interest.

The Potsdam agreement, however, can in no way be regarded—even as concerns Germany—as a final solution. It leaves unsolved all the vital economic questions—the future of the Ruhr and Rhineland; the degree to which German heavy industry is to be "eliminated" as an alternative to its international control; the extent to which German labour is to contribute to reparations; the meaning of a German standard of life "not exceeding the average of European countries." Above all, until the future population of the Reich, which is now being swollen by floods of refugees from Polish and Czech areas, is known, how is it to be decided that this or that proportion of existing capital equipment is "unnecessary for the German peace economy"? On all these problems the communique is silent. Having established a sensible machinery of inter-Allied control and formulated an equally sensible political directive, it leaves to the future the solution of the most controversial economic problems.

It would be absurd, therefore, to suggest that the pattern of German reconstruction has been settled by the Potsdam communique. What has been achieved is a framework within which, given continuing goodwill, the pattern can be worked out. It is a beginning—immensely overdue—of what must be a lengthy process of "growing together"; and all its good effects will be dissipated if it is construed as anything better than this. At Moscow, two years ago, the Big Three achieved an atmosphere of goodwill, and established the European Advisory Commission to work out the plans for Germany. The atmosphere soon evaporated, and the Commission completely failed to produce any inter-Allied plan. The newly established Council of Foreign Ministers, which replaces it, must not be permitted to languish in the same way, until, at the last moment, another Big Three conference is called to avoid a complete breakdown.

The new Labour Government can play the decisive part in preventing this from happening. Mr. Noel-Baker, most happily chosen as Mr. Bevin's Number Two, will, we hope, be entrusted with the task of formulating clearly and precisely the new British policy towards Austria, Italy, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary and Finland, and thus ensuring that our German policy is integrated into a consistent policy for Southern and Central Europe. Equally, we must work out British proposals for a solution of the German frontier problem in relation both to Poland and to Czechoslovakia. It must not make nonsense of the plans for German reconstruction; it must limit the transfer of population to a number which can be absorbed into the new German economy, after the destruction of the war potential and the removal of reparations in kind.

Meanwhile, the execution of the most important part of the Potsdam plan will be the responsibility of the new Secretary of State for War, to whom the British Control Commission is solely answerable. This fact is, to say the least of it, disquieting. Mr. Lawson has courage, Field-Marshal Montgomery a galvanic energy; but is it wise to leave to the War Office, and to a Field-Marshal, with a professional diplomat as his sole political adviser, the job on whose success our relations with Russia depend? True, the Potsdam conference has provided the British Control Commission with very much the kind of policy for which we have pleaded for many months—the formation at once of "central German administrative departments" for key services (though we regret to observe the omission of Information services from the list); the encouragement of anti-Fascist political parties and Trade Unions; the restoration of a German press; the beginnings of local self-government and the breaking of the chemical and steel trusts. But when all is said and done, this is only a very general directive. Everything depends on how it is carried out, and we are not confident about either the capacity of the Military Government personnel on the spot or the War Office as the directing hand in London. Something a great deal more drastic than a directive will be needed to make our existing Control Commission and Military Government personnel carry out the policy laid down at Potsdam.

One step could be taken at once. Mr. Attlee would be well advised to nominate a Resident Minister with Cabinet rank as Field-Marshal Montgomery's civilian adviser, and to equip him with a small specialist staff, strong enough to defeat the obstructionism of Military Government, to arrange for the gradual replacement of military by civilian officials, and generally to ensure that the new directive is really carried out in the spirit as well as in the letter. Under this arrangement, whereas the administration of the British Control Commission would remain a War Office responsibility, its policy would be formulated by the Cabinet, and would be supervised on the spot by a Minister with direct access both to Mr. Bevin and Mr. Attlee. Without this change, the Potsdam blue-print, as it affects the British Zone, will never get beyond the drawing-board.

THE ZIONIST CONFERENCE

THE World Zionist Conference, now meeting in London, is the first since 1939. In his opening address Dr. Weizman declared that the intervening years have seen "the greatest catastrophe that has befallen our people since the destruction of the Temple." Delegates from America and the Continent are attending the Conference, and the most significant thing about it is that its proceedings are having the scantiest reports in the press. The plight of the Jewish survivors of the Nazi persecutions and their future would seem to be matters of small "news value" or perhaps it is that, in the tangle of contemporary complexities, there is a disinclination to draw public attention to a problem that may seem insoluble. "The truth is," said Dr. Weizman, "that Hitler has won the war in so far as the Jews are concerned, and that the world does not know what to do with the Jews."

There are still, it is alleged, thousands of Jews in the cleansed concentration camps, "liberated but not free." There are 140,000 in Germany and Austria fearful for their future, and a delegate at the Conference, who has just returned from a tour of the Continent, declared that the one desire of the great majority of the one and a half million Jews in the liberated countries is to migrate. The Jews who have been allowed to return to their old homes in Czechoslovakia report that they are "unwelcome and unwanted." Women who have returned to Hungary from forced labour in the Reich, urge their fellows not to follow them. There was, of course, rhetorical exaggeration in the assertion at the Conference that there is no such thing as "an easy or comfortable Judaism." That is contradicted in Great Britain, in the United States and, apparently, in Russia; but it is true that the mass of Jews in Europe have no place where they can securely and happily lay their heads.

Where are they to go? In his essay in the volume *The Future of the Jews* Sir Norman Angell hints that this country might absorb additions to the 50,000 refugees already here, and that the sparsely populated Dominions might advantageously welcome thousands of Jewish immigrants. In the same volume Mr. Edward Hulton imagines "a future United States of Brazil conducted largely by Jews and Scotsmen." Many thousand Jews have been absorbed in the melting pot of the United States but, for all the sympathy with Jewish suffering, it is most unlikely that the restriction of immigration into the American Republic will be materially modified, and the fact has to be recognised that, however badly the Dominions need larger populations, it is most improbable that they will be ready to welcome mass Jewish immigration. The Zionist Conference, therefore, is perfectly justified in declaring that Palestine is the only hope, the only place on earth where the Jews have been led to believe they may live by right and not on sufferance.

The Balfour Declaration was Great Britain's acceptance of the claims of the Jewish National Home policy, and that policy was endorsed by the League of Nations. The White Paper of 1939, which reduced Jewish immigration into Palestine to a trickle—only 65,000 were admitted in the war years—was, as Dr. Weizman says, a "defiance of Britain's pledged word, of international obligations and of the authority of the League of Nations." It was the result partly of the insistent pro-Moslemism of British officialdom in the Middle East and partly of the not unreasonable desire to placate the Arab Powers.

The Zionists demand the immediate repudiation of the White Paper, permits at once for 100,000 immigrants with the pledge of the future sanction of continuous immigration. Apart from international agreement and the urgent need for the provision of refuge for the persecuted, the claim is justified by the unparalleled success of the Jewish colonisation. In the agricultural settlements, Jewish skill and enthusiasm have secured the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah that "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." In my visits to Palestine—the last was in 1937—I was amazed by the metamorphosis in a very short time of the immigrants from the ghettoes of Eastern Europe into efficient, self-reliant peasant cultivators, with a distinctive culture and an interest in the things of the spirit, certainly not to be found in any similar settlements. Land neglected, water-logged or arid, had been made productive. The life of the people was vivid, contented and attractive. The industrial achievements are equally remarkable, though with the apparently inevitable accompaniment of industrial ugliness. Tel-Aviv is a horrid town; and many of the new buildings outside the old walls of Jerusalem are monstrous.

I think that there is very little in the claim that the Jews have a greater right to Palestine than the Arabs because they were there first. I am convinced that the spiritual inspiration that has enabled so much to be done in so short a time, comes from the declaration of the nations that Palestine is the Jews' very own present-day home. Norman Bentwich has said that the colonists soon become orientalised, but that is not evident to the observant visitor. On the contrary, the Jews have carried Europe into Asia, and there's the rub. Jewish enterprise and capital have vastly improved the conditions of the fellaheen, but there remains the instinctive dislike of the man, content to scrape the land with a wooden ploughshare, for the man who employs a tractor. The man of the day-before-yesterday must find it hard to live with the bustling man of to-day. There are still people to whom progress, with its inventions and discoveries, is repulsive.

The opposition of the Arab governments to Zionism is due to the conviction, shared by Soviet Russia, that regard for the Jews has been a hypocritical excuse for the establishment of a British Imperial outpost in the Middle East. This belief has been strengthened by the late Lord Wedgwood's plea that a Jewish Palestine should become the Fifth Dominion and by enthusiasts like Mrs. Dugdale who recently wrote:

> A Jewish State situated on one of the great strategic key-points of the world's sea and air routes, would be as a rock of defence for all those freedoms which we fight to establish. If in time a Jewish Palestine were to become part of the British Commonwealth of Nations all the world would be gainers and, most of all, the Jews and ourselves.

The Arabs agree with the "most of all," but they are yet to be convinced that they stand to gain anything.

At the Zionist Conference, speaker after speaker has recalled that the Labour Party was unanimous in its opposition to the White Paper. But Dr. Weizman reminded the Conference that Mr. Churchill was as emphatic as Mr. Morrison in opposition to the White Paper and he added the warning that "new facts are being created which are calculated to prejudge the issue." The new facts concern the oil of the Middle East with which America and Russia are concerned as well as Great Britain. The need for oil inevitably adds to the disinclination of the Powers to antagonise the Arabs.

Two years ago I tried to persuade Sir Wyndham Deedes that the one effective line of action for the English friends of Zionism was to endeavour to persuade the Arab governments of the immense potential economic advantage to all the Arab countries of a progressive Jewish Palestine, not as a British Dominion, but as a member of the Arab Confederation. That I am convinced should be the one aim of Jewish statesmanship. The Jews have shown what they can do in Palestine. They can do still more with a larger population and the development of the still considerable derelict parts of the country. It must be for their advantage to be in the closest political and economic relations with their neighbours. In the changed circumstances, the position of the Mandatory Power is enormously difficult. The peaceful and permanent establishment of the National Home can only be effected with the goodwill of the Big Three and, as Norman Bentwich has urged, of France, with the understanding consent of the Arab governments. If the Labour Government can establish this collaboration it will have done a great work of humanitarian statesmanship. It can be helped by the Zionist leaders. It will be taking a first vital step if it makes it clear that a Jewish Palestine does not mean to Downing Street a British Imperial Palestine.

SIDNEY DARK

A LONDON DIARY

"FOR once," said my friend who understands atoms and such like, "for once the press cannot be too sensational. This is the biggest discovery ever made. The principal, once established, can be so applied that almost everything else becomes out of date." Does it mean, I asked him, that small Powers which can't afford gigantic plants needing 100,000 men to run them, can use atomic energy? He explained that the necessary resources for production cannot be found in any existing countries except the U.S., the U.S.S.R. and the British Commonwealth, but that the time will come when these Great Powers can, if they will, sell the stuff by the pound, so to speak, to other countries which can use it for power stations, and substitute it for coal or indeed for any form of energy. Though it will remain extremely expensive to produce the cost to the nation that buys it will not be high for what it can achieve, because the quantity needed to produce an immense amount of power will be so very small. I asked my friend for examples of the peacetime objects that could be achieved. He replied that it would now be practicable to make plans for visiting the moon and indeed touring the Universe and that no doubt such ancient fantasies would in time be everyday events. But in the near future it would be more useful to develop vast desert areas—the Arctic, the Sahara, the sterile spaces of Australia. What land is waste mainly because of the absence of water; there is now nowhere where it will not be possible to reach deep-lying water. This should end the problem of Indian and Asiatic poverty. "Indeed," he said, "most of the economic problems we discuss look pretty silly now."

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Like many other people, I knew that there had been a danger of the Germans being the first to get the atomic bomb, and that it was going ahead in the United States. But that it was ready for use was a very well-kept secret. Novelists and play-writers have been writing for years about the moral problem that would confront the inventor or the nation which possesses such a secret weapon. The most prophetic was undoubtedly Harold Nicolson's *Public Faces*. (I wish the kind fellow who borrowed my copy would return it.) This is an extremely witty book, in which the atomic bomb is discovered after the creation of a Labour Government, which includes Bevan and Greenwood, and the fall of a Conservative Government, which contains Winston Churchill and Brendan Bracken. Surely a most remarkable prophecy. The moral of the book, as with all the others, is that world unity is the unavoidable alternative to world destruction. In the Wells fantasy, *The World Set Free*, the crumbling of atoms, once started, cannot be stopped, and our cities fall in to holes in the earth. Listening to scientists the last few days, it has seemed to me that quite a small mistake in the way of breaking up the atom might start a process which would go on until this world had become a sun. But I see that this is officially regarded as unlikely. One possible idea is to achieve World Unity by organising a world war against Mars.

The B.B.C. announcers have all adopted a tone of solemn jubilation in reading the news of the atomic bomb's success in "vaporising" a Japanese town with a population of 300,000 men, women and children. I very much doubt whether this chimes with the mood of the public. Obviously, we are all relieved that the Germans didn't drop it on London, but apart from that, everyone I've met was plunged into gloom by the news of the invention. While we are told officially of "excellent results," I find everywhere an increasing moral revulsion. In 1940 we denounced the Nazis because they started indiscriminate bombing, and justified our own bombing on the score that we did not begin the dirty business. To-day there can be no shadow of doubt that we have begun a new and far more indiscriminate type of warfare. The fact is, of course, that official indignation at the use of new weapons and techniques has been pure hypocrisy throughout this war. It was not morality which restrained us or the Germans from the use of gas or of bacteriological warfare, but the simple fact that they were boomerang weapons. If we had had a thousand Lancasters in 1939 we should probably have Coventrated Berlin before the Germans invented the word. In fact, we had only the prototype of the Lancaster, and the Germans started strategic bombing first. We denounced the immorality of it, while we busily caught up with the Germans and carried strategic bombing one stage further. Then the Germans in their turn became morally indignant and constructed V1 and V2. Caught unawares by this new technique, we denounced German terrorism and perfected the atomic bomb. And so it goes on.

* * *

I hope that Mr. Attlee will break away from the Churchill tradition of moral gloating. We should all be relieved if he told us frankly that, once a total war has started, we, like every other nation, are bound to develop and use every form of warfare against men, women and children which damages the enemy more than it damages us. We cannot, therefore, without hypocrisy, blame the enemy if he does the same. The men we can and should condemn as criminals are those responsible for starting a total war. The Charter of the International Military Tribunal for the trial of "war criminals" (not dealt with by the national courts of liberated countries) is therefore logical. It provides for indictment for War Crimes (violations of the laws of war) and Crimes against Humanity, such as mass exterminations. But it gives first place to Crimes against Peace—planning or waging a war of aggression.

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The strongest reaction I have come across against the "obliteration" of Hiroshima was from an Indian friend who is, I believe, in this matter typical of his countrymen. They still look at political action from a moral point of view, and sometimes recall that the British used to share this characteristic. To them the obliteration of a civilian population (who, as they see, certainly had less responsibility for the war than the citizens of a western democracy with some control of their government) is a moral outrage, made worse by the fact that the Anglo-American ultimatum to Japan made no mention of this new weapon. I believe that the effect will be similar throughout Asia; the Chinese have never agreed with the Americans about the subhuman Japanese and the tendency in Asia is increasingly hostile to White mechanised domination. I know that all such moral and psychological factors will seem only sentimental to the High Command in the Pacific, but I am sufficiently old-fashioned myself to believe that the principles for which we say we were fighting were based on a long experience of human relations, and that to act as if the people of any country were vermin, outside the scope of moral obligation, is to begin the disintegration of our own society.

No nation can claim exclusive credit for the discovery of the atomic bomb. It is perhaps fair to claim Chadwick as the inventor of the first step. Others who have played a vital part are Fermi, an Italian, Joliot, a Frenchman, and, ironically, Yukawa, a Japanese physicist; then of course a number of great English and American physicists and engineers. But in the later stages much important work was done by the Danish anti-Fascist scientist, Bohr, and two German-Jewish refugees who escaped from Hitler. Hitler might have won the war if he had not persecuted the Jews.

* * *

I had hoped Mr. Attlee would go further towards grouping his Ministers on the lines laid down in Haldane's *Machinery of Government Report* and elaborated by him in his book on the *Labour Party in Perspective* (1937). He must have had some good reason for rejecting the idea of a smaller Cabinet with "non-departmental" Ministers who, as he said, should have "the faculty of directing broad issues of policy. They should be in charge of functions, not Departments." Morrison and Greenwood, I suppose, both come under this category, and Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Attlee himself are at the head of groups of Departments. But this is a long way from the conception of a Cabinet of Ministers directing Defence, Foreign and Economic policy, and I should particularly have liked to see the principle applied much more thoroughly to the housing problem. Again, I wish someone would explain to me the origin of the tradition of moving Ministers from one Department, which they understand, to a new one which they have to learn. It is something like a principle of British government and no innovation of Mr. Attlee's. I ask in no spirit of criticism, but merely for information. Why must Miss Wilkinson, who did a good job in the Home Office, undertake the highly detailed job of giving effect to the Butler Education Act, while Mr. Chuter Ede, who as Under-Secretary had a really sound grasp of the complexities of this Act, goes to the Home Office? It may work well enough, but it is not to be explained merely by the needs of promotion, which could have been easily managed otherwise. I wish somebody would explain.

* * *

News which reaches me from friends in the Italian Liberation Movement makes mixed reading. So far as political life is concerned, the well-intentioned efforts of A.M.G. to keep Italy apron-strung by an alien, avuncular administration is clearly meeting with no success. It is much too soon to say yet that democracy in Italy is a reality; all we can say is that the process of reorganising parties and trade unions goes strongly ahead, whatever A.M.G. may think about it, and the press is vigorous and free. The decision of the Socialist Party Convention to call on the Executive to prepare proposals for fusion with the Communists was carried, against the wishes of Silone and the Party Intellectuals, by a big majority of votes from northern factory workers. Fusion, however, seems unlikely to take place until after the elections. Nenni is said to be confident of having electoral lists ready by November, but my friends expect the elections to be held not earlier than next January or February. Their forecast is that, in spite of dissensions between Clericals and laymen in their ranks, the Christian Democrats will get the biggest proportion (perhaps a third) of the votes; that the Communist Party will poll about 25 per cent., and the Socialists about 15 per cent., the remainder being split between the various small groups—Popular Action, Christian Socialists, Liberals and so on. It looks as if any government resulting from the elections is bound to be a coalition aligned well to the left of centre.

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The whole Italian picture, however, is overshadowed by the dismal economic outlook. Collection of last year's abundant harvest was terribly obstructed by lack of transport; only about a fifth of the sugar crop, for example, was gathered. This year there has been a severe spring drought over most of Italy, and it is estimated that all crops will be well below normal. In the case of wheat a 4 million ton harvest is forecast, as compared with a pre-war total consumption of 8 million tons. If conditions of semi-starvation are to be avoided, a minimum of 2 million tons of wheat will have to be imported between now and the harvest of 1946. Coal stocks are non-existent. Italy's pre-war consumption was 12 million tons and minimum imports of 3 million tons (that is more than double the present rate) will be needed if extreme hardship is to be avoided. There is enough scrap iron knocking about the country to enable the steel works to maintain for a time output at 50 per cent. of the normal rate, provided they can get coal and provided the scrap can be transported to the North; but, though the British Army has done a fine job of bridge-building and repair of the permanent way of the main lines is going ahead, there is an appalling shortage of locomotives and rolling stock, only a fifth of the pre-war resources being left in Northern Italy. The shortage, of course, can be made good to some extent by imports of lorries, but this means more petrol. Unless Unrra acts much more vigorously, the winter outlook for Italy is dark; and looking ahead to next year's harvest, there is an urgent need throughout the country for fertilisers.

* * *

The atomic bomb brought to my memory a curious story of which the hero was the Scottish mathematician of the sixteenth century, John Napier of Merchiston. His fame rests on the invention of logarithms, which he perfected in order to facilitate his interpretation of mystical numbers in the Book of Daniel. At the time of the Armada he invented for the Protestant Cause a series of secret weapons, which included a sort of primitive tank and a set of burning mirrors. According to his own account he kept the most deadly of these devices secret after trying it out in the Pentland Hills against a flock of sheep, which it annihilated from a considerable distance. Before he died, Napier destroyed his record of this invention, because he doubted whether mankind was good enough to be entrusted with such terrible powers. He seems to have been a man of foresight as well as of ingenuity.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to J. M. Ordeig.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

There are three officials in control of the Tower itself. Chief of them is the Constable, now Field-marshal Lord Chetwode. He has complete power inside its limits, though he cannot order the garrison to do anything without the consent of the War Office.—*Evening Standard.*

May we hope that now that the European war is over, our Church authorities will do all they can to see that Sunday labour and classes are brought to an end? . . . Also can the Sunday morning transport be restored so as to help worshippers attend church?—Letter in the *Church Times.*

Does anyone want a sporting, hunting parson, keen on his job and keen on people who love horses? —Advt. in *The Times.*

Scottish sportsmen want quick release of game-keepers from the Services to help grouse-shooting prospects. An estate proprietor in the north said yesterday: "Speedy demobilisation of gamekeepers would help enormously."—*Scottish Daily Express.*

MR. BEVIN AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE—II

JUST before the war, a business man, whose life had been saved by Foreign Office intervention, humbly requested that he be permitted to show his gratitude by service in kind. "Give me two days," he begged a high official, "to reorganise your internal telephone service." The offer was turned down—politely but decisively.

This incident illustrates one minor but extremely urgent problem which confronts Mr. Bevin. The present administration of the Foreign Office is impossible. It is almost as though one ordered a car for use on a trans-African trip and a week later a coach, polished and burnished, with two postillions up behind, appeared at the door. The Foreign Office is an exquisitely articulated Department of State, but it belongs to a vanished age. Private secretaries and stenographers are forbidden; the head of a department must use the traditional "pool." In the middle of an important interview he must answer the telephone personally because he is forbidden to employ anyone to answer it for him. The registry is so situated geographically and so organised that hours are wasted in the passage of documents. The architecture of the building itself is excellently adapted to the ceremonious signing of covenants, but not for conduct of efficient business. Crowning all, the Permanent Under-Secretary, without the help of one efficient office executive, has to waste his time, which should be spent on foreign policy, in attending to petty administrative details.

The results are two-fold. A completely inadequate staff is still further harassed by inefficiencies avoided in every modern office. But because the Foreign Office official believes the Foreign Office is perfect, he grimly defends the present system, and tries to argue that foreign policy does not need new-fangled devices, such as internal telephones, teleprinters, filing systems, or even secretaries. He and his colleagues can do their job, thank you, and what was good enough for Sir Eyre Crowe, in 1907, is good enough for them. Anyway, it is very like life at All Souls, which is all the better for having no private bathrooms.

Mr. Bevin will find a great deal of high-minded sincere resistance to administrative efficiency in the Foreign Office. Continuous overwork has brought with it nervous overstrain and a tendency to petulant traditionalism. The office, at times, is perilously near to complete paralysis. But unless he reforms the office system promptly and drastically, no other reform can possibly succeed. A competent administrator, for instance, from the Ministry of Labour could work miracles in a few weeks if invested with sufficient authority to remove the burden from those whose real job is the formulation of policy.

But more is needed than office reform. We argued in a previous article that a separate and separately trained Intelligence Division was essential, and that its authority must be equal to that of the present regional departments. Alongside this Intelligence Division there should be constructed another Division concerned exclusively with long-term policy. Sir Eyre Crowe could write his masterly memoranda on the basic principles of British policy because he had time and leisure to sit in a room and think. The tempo of current affairs was leisurely and the flow was a mere trickle compared to the broad stream which enters the Office to-day. It is now essential to separate and allot to separate Divisions the functions of current policy and of long-term planning. This is a matter-of-course in every military staff and in every well-organised business. By adopting it, Mr. Bevin would divide the Foreign Office into five Divisions—Administration, Intelligence, Current Policy, and Long-term Policy, each handled by a Deputy Under-Secretary. As we shall see below, the fifth division would be required for Public Relations.

It is in the staffing of this new Long-term Policy Division that Mr. Bevin could inject the new blood so urgently required. Since it would deal exclusively with foreign policy in the broadest sense, as distinct from diplomacy, no permanent official could reasonably insist that its personnel must be professional diplomats who have entered the Foreign Office in the traditional way from Oxford and Cambridge. Indeed, it is obvious that the personnel of such a Division must be men of varied experience in foreign affairs, in trade relations, in politics in the widest sense of the word, and in strategy. Such men are to be found to-day relatively easily both among our higher staff officers and among those temporary civil servants responsible for inter-Allied planning and for such administrative tasks as the Middle-Eastern Supply Board or the inter-Allied shipping control.

The need for this new Division cannot be overemphasised. Every time that the Big Three have met, we have been under a grave disadvantage in the discussions of post-war policy, because the Russians came to the Conference with clearly formulated plans while we brought with us a bundle of reservations and good intentions. This was not true as regards strategy or war production for the simple reason that the military staffs and the civilian agencies responsible were efficiently organised and able to formulate their plans. Our failure in foreign policy was very largely due to the fact that the harassed officials in the Foreign Office had neither the time nor the competence to formulate, for instance, a British policy for Germany, or the basic principles of our policy in the Middle East. They excused themselves for failing to work out such plans by suggesting that in a democratic state major policy decisions must be left to the Cabinet. But it is obvious that busy politicians cannot possibly decide on such complex issues unless the permanent officials have done the initial work and formulated the problem in a series of clear alternative policies which can be discussed in the Cabinet. If we accept the Foreign Office excuse for its failure, then the logical conclusion must be that only totalitarian States can have foreign policies; democracies must extemporise.

Mr. Bevin is not the man to take this as an answer. But if he is to present a clear, coherent policy to the Cabinet, then he must have at his disposal in the Foreign Office a group of men as exclusively devoted to this task in regard to foreign affairs as the joint planning section of the British Chiefs of Staff are in relation to strategy. These men must, in collaboration with the Board of Trade—including we hope, the Department of Overseas Trade—and the Service Ministries, do that basic long-term thinking on which current policy decisions must be made.

Once the principle is agreed that the formulation of policy should not be left exclusively to professional diplomatists, it follows that Ambassadors also should be sought for outside the ranks of the Diplomatic Service. Who can doubt that Mr. Davies did a better job at Moscow than any professional diplomat? Who can dispute that Mr. Harold Macmillan in Algiers served Anglo-American relations better than Mr. Mack? If he is supported by a strong staff of trained officials, there is everything to be said for nominating as Ambassadors in Washington, Moscow, Paris, and Chungking men of personality who will really represent in the full sense of the word the Government of this country. The insertion of outstanding personalities into the highest positions is the correct method of improving Foreign Office personnel, not, as Mr. Eden suggested, the opening of diplomacy as a career to slightly more boys from the secondary schools.

There remains one other major problem: the relation of foreign policy to public opinion both at home and abroad. This work is at present done by a variety of organisations, the News Department of the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Information, the Political Warfare Executive, and the British Council, not to mention the European and Empire Services of the B.B.C. The Foreign Office has always regarded publicity as something slightly indecent and ungentlemanly. A perfectly reasonable dislike of propaganda is mixed up with a quite unreasonable preference for secretiveness. The result, during the war, has been that, despite a complex system of directives, our publicity services have often taken one line on a major issue and our diplomats another. This was only too evident in the Darlan and Badoglio crises.

To avoid such mishaps in the future, two things are necessary. On the one side, the Foreign Office must realise that public opinion, both at home and abroad, is a vital factor, not only in foreign policy but also in diplomacy. We cannot afford to say one thing in public and another thing in the conference room. On the other side, we must avoid the less obvious danger of hamstringing our publicity services by subjecting them too rigidly to Foreign Office control. If we permit a Ministry of Information to exist independent of the Foreign Office, there is a danger of speaking with two voices. If we bring all the publicity services into the Foreign Office, there is a danger that we shall have no publicity.

It is not easy to find a way out of this dilemma. A possible solution may be looked for in the constitution, though not in the output, of the British Council. This is now a public corporation with its own charter, not unlike that of the B.B.C. Mr. Bevin might be well advised to remodel the British Council, so that it includes all the Government's foreign publicity services, including the policy direction of the B.B.C. European and Empire Services, and its own Intelligence Section for the study of the "market." On the Board of Governors would, of course, be included representatives of the Foreign Office and of the Board of Trade, and it would have to work in the closest contact with the Foreign Office itself through the newly constituted Publicity Division.

Such reforms would inevitably take a very considerable time to carry out, and would depend very largely on the good will of the Permanent Under-Secretary. Much turns on Mr. Bevin's selection for this post.

CZECHS AND GERMANS

[BY A CORRESPONDENT RECENTLY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA]

MARIANSKY LAZNE, better known by its German name of Marienbad, is a town of ugly buildings in a beautiful setting of pine-covered hills. Superficially, it seems unaffected by the war. It has not been bombed. The glass in the shop windows is intact. The streets are full of people, the trades are not exclusively those of the U.S. Army, and at night the street lights glitter under the trees and there is the sound of dance music from some, at least, of the hotels. Appearances are deceptive. Marianský Lazne suffers from most of the troubles that beset Europe, with the addition of some problems peculiar to that part of Czechoslovakia.

Few of the shops are open, and those that are have virtually nothing to sell. Greengrocery and hairdressing are the two major trades left, although there is one shop that has a few sun spectacles for sale. All but ten of the hotels are still emergency hospitals full of either Germans wounded or sick evacuated from Berlin. The majority of people in the streets wear a white yellow armlet, which means that they are Germans and liable to expulsion at some indefinite date. The three hotels that have dance bands are American Red Cross establishments, and the girls that dance there are displaced persons from all over Europe, including two from Turkey. The town has warmth and light and enough food. But for most people now in it it has no future.

The Czechoslovak Government has resolved that all Germans, both *Reichsdeutche* refugees and former citizens of the Republic, are to be expelled. The majority of the former have already left the

western Sudetenlands. The pre-war population of Karlovy Vary (Carlsbad) was 30,000, of Mariansky Lazne, 15,000. On Germany's surrender, in May, the numbers had grown to 85,000 and 45,000 respectively, the additions being refugees from Germany. By the middle of July the figures had been reduced to about 50,000 and 25,000, respectively. At the same time the number of Czechoslovaks is growing. In Mariansky Lazne, for example, in 1938, about one quarter of the population were Czech. When the town was liberated last May there were only 12 Czechs left. Now there are over 1,000.

The Czech case, in brief, is that the German in Czechoslovakia has refused to be assimilated. Before 1918 he regarded himself as superior to the Czech and behaved as Germans with that belief seemed compelled to do. For the first five years after 1918 the German population stood aloof from the political life of the Republic. From 1925 to 1930 there was some measure of co-operation. From 1930 to 1935 the Germans returned to resentment, seeming to believe that the depression that left them unemployed must be the exclusive fault of the Czechs. From 1935 to 1938 many of them conspired with the Germans of the Third Reich and did their best to disrupt the State, and they finally succeeded. From 1939 to 1945 the Sudetens supplied a high proportion of the personnel of the S.S. terror in the new Protectorate.

Of course, the story is not wholly black and white, but broadly speaking, it is true that the Sudeten Germans—apart from an active and heroic Social-Democrat and Communist minority—never accepted equality of status between Slav and Teuton after 1918, and regarded the second world war as a chance of regaining their old status. They lost the war, and they are paying the price. It would be asking too much to expect the Czechoslovaks, when they plan the future of their country, to proceed on the basis that the Germans will stay and that bygones can become bygones at once. Moreover, there are other emotions at work in the Czechoslovak breast besides righteous indignation. The Germans in the Sudetenlands in 1938 numbered about 3,300,000, as compared with a total of some 10,000,000 Czechs and Slovaks in the whole Republic. The Sudeten areas were among the most industrialised in the country. The Czechoslovak Government have passed decrees sequestrating all the property in Czechoslovakia of Germans and of collaborators, and in consequence the State will acquire anything from one fifth to one quarter of the total capital resources of the country without compensation.

When a property is sequestrated in this way a National Administrator is appointed. He is selected by the central government in Prague or by the Area Government (Plzen is the seat of the Area Government for the American occupation zone), but before being allowed to take possession he must be approved by the Committee or Governor of the district to which he comes. In theory, he is supposed to have some managerial experience. In practice he is sometimes no more than a carpet-bagger. But the district authorities are fully alive to the dangers of that situation. The Military Governor in Karlovy Vary said to me that, so far, this was his worst problem, and that he was determined to deny to the potential exploiter any opportunity of getting a foothold in his area. He seemed, too, to be the type of man who could do so.

In Cheb this problem is not so acute, for a great many of the factories there were managed by Czechs before 1938 and many of them have come back. In some ways Cheb is well placed. The town itself was badly bombed and the railway viaduct to the east shattered, but the line to Plzen opened at the end of July and most of the factories are intact, have supplies of raw materials, and are working again. The Germans used the Cheb area for the storage of supplies for the whole of the Protectorate. These are naturally now more readily available for that area. The Military Governor in Cheb is reasonably optimistic about the future of his area.

But the practical problems raised by the proposed expulsion of the Germans are considerable. A fair estimate of the number of former citizens who are German, now left in Czechoslovakia is 2,800,000, but out of the 10,000,000 Czechs and Slovaks, 1,300,000 were transported to Germany to work during the war and only some 700,000 have returned. The rest are presumed to have died. Further, the Czech armies with the Russians suffered heavy losses. How, then, is Czechoslovakia going to repopulate the areas formerly occupied by the Germans? How, likewise, is she going to supply the skilled craftsmen that made the glass and china products of those areas, to mention only two trades, so popular and so competitive throughout Europe? The longer the Czechoslovaks think over the prospect of expelling every German, the greater the practical difficulties will appear.

There is one exception to the decree that every German must go. Those who showed themselves actively anti-Fascist, and who struggled in defence of the Republic, are to be given a status equal to that of citizens of Czechoslovak origin. This exception is likely to extend to far fewer Germans than might be expected. First, even the most determined of Social Democrats and Communists among the Germans had little opportunity of struggling in defence of the Republic. Usually he spent from 1938 onwards in a German concentration camp. Some did fight. The Committee which is investigating provisional claims in Mariansky Lazne consists of three men, one Czech, one Communist from Plzen, one German Social Democrat and one German Communist. The two Germans managed to stay in hiding in the area and were in touch with the Czech resistance movement throughout the occupation.

But out of the 10,000 Germans in Mariansky Lazne only some 110 families (about 180 people) have applied for recognition under this heading; and most of the applications have been refused, on the grounds that the evidence of "struggle" for the Republic was no more than a liking for B.B.C. foreign broadcasts. If the figures for the whole area are comparable, not more than 5/10,000 Germans can possibly qualify for Czechoslovak rights.

The difference between the Russian and the American zones of occupation is not marked. Karlovy Vary, in the Russian zone, was damaged in April and May, mainly at the northern end of the bridge of the river to the north of the town. But the baths and pump room are in working order and the town may become a Russian officers' leave centre. The Russians handed over administration to the Czechoslovaks in the town rather earlier than their American counterparts in Mariansky Lazne did. The Russians have a greater liking for display than have the Americans. There are two triumphal red and gold arches in the main streets of Karlovy Vary, adorned with portraits of Benes and Stalin. In Mariansky Lazne there is not even a photograph of President Truman to be seen. But the American soldiers are more in evidence than the Russians and the American trucks are much more noticeable, and dangerous, than the Russian horse-drawn carts.

To the Czechoslovaks, however, armies of occupation have a great deal in common, particularly on the debit side. The things of which the people of Brno complain against the Russians are repeated by the inhabitants of Plzen in respect of the Americans, and, indeed, by the Dutch over the British and Canadians. To a soldier there are two kinds of property—private property, the things he carries on his back, and public property, everything else. The Russians strip Czechoslovak factories of machinery to re-equip devastated Russia, and S.H.A.E.F. requisitions glass in Czechoslovakia to restore to working order a German factory at Nuremburg. To the Czechoslovaks both acts are equally difficult to understand.

The future of the Sudeten Germans is dark. Some "good" Germans among them will have a great deal less than justice, whatever happens, and it is not very becoming for a British subject unlikely to suffer the same fate to tell them to bear this with fortitude as a racial misfortune. A policy of paying more attention to where these displaced Germans can go, and what can be done to settle them usefully wherever they do go, is likely to be of more practical use to Europe than cries of protest at Czech "inhumanity." A small group of anti-Fascists have been settled, since 1938, in Western Canada, and proved themselves loyal and industrious colonists. We owe it to those men and women who must now lose everything because of the sins of their fellow-countrymen, to make a real effort on their behalf.

RADIO NOTES

Plus ça change . . . The G.F.P. had, of course, to be re-baptised; but it is not easy, at present, to see how the new dispensation can be said to differ importantly from the old. The G.F.P. could only be made "lighter" by the removal of symphonic music and a few (very few) talks. Now that this has largely been done, the result, it is confidently expected, will prove a successful rival to any Radio Normandie (or Luxembourg or whatever) which may rear its ugly head on the Continent and attempt to steal the thunder of the B.B.C. Whether this is possible—or, if possible, desirable—is open to question: "foreigners" have a nasty flair for capturing the lowest common denominator, as Hollywood has amply proved. So why not leave them their dubious catch and aim elsewhere? If the B.B.C. is to retain its manifold public, it will have to do this by cultivating the specific virtues of *British* broadcasting (and there are several)—not by some half-hearted adoption of American methods and other forms of what in my young days used to be called tizzy-snatching.

Meanwhile, the Home Service, decorated by a planetary system of Regions, is to continue to function along the same lines as before—that middle course which, if carefully kept to, has much to recommend it. The middle-brow has no cause to complain and the high-brow's savage breast is soothed with a promise of better things to come in the form of a "minority" programme which will eventually (this year, next year . . .) run parallel to the others, at all events during the leisure hours of the day. This should be the optimum; but I cannot help fearing that, when the time comes, it will be found difficult to keep Programme C adequately supplied with material, unless the more intelligent and sensitive of our writers can somehow be cajoled into becoming more radio-conscious than they show any signs of being at present. For no good can come of the still very prevalent attitude that to write broadcasts—and especially dramatised or semi-dramatised broadcasts—is in some way *infra dig.*, in the sense in which serious composers often speak of film music as *infra dig.* The answer is: It all depends on how you do it. Deliberately to write *down* to a public of supposititious morons is, of course, degrading; it is also quite unnecessary. The intimacy of the medium is in itself a safeguard (if you need one) against avoidable vulgarity. And in this connection I foresee an important future for the Regions—not only where their own special publics are concerned, but as a forum where all that is best and most individual in the diversities of national character, humour, imagination, and poetry, could, by influencing one another, enrich immeasurably the life of the nation as a whole.

Variety remains in a curious and equivocal position. Most of these broadcasts have been moved into the Light Programme, which is where they obviously belong; but two or three established favourites have been retained in the Home Service, by way (one supposes) of helping to preserve the middle course. Do they also leaven the lump? That I must leave to others to decide, merely remarking that those who complain of the low standard of radio Variety are apt to forget that these programmes have to be *new* each week, whereas in the theatre a single script may run for months at a time. The main difficulty, as I see it, is that Variety actually *is* the singers, jokers, and players who perform it, to an extent unapproached by any other kind of

broadcast, however "star" the performers. Thus Variety is always more or less impromptu in its technique and derives much of its characteristic virtues from that fact. The result, in radio as in the theatre, is that each programme in the schedule tends to be built up round the personality of a single actor or actress, a practice which makes for staleness in the long run. Moreover, Variety as a whole is in the peculiar position of achieving the highest listening figures, while at the same time it is difficult to discover individual listeners who have a good word to say for these programmes, with the signal exception of Itma. The unflattering conclusion seems to be that very few out of the vast Variety public really listen to these broadcasts at all, except in the most desultory fashion; what they amount to is a vague sound-texture which many people find an agreeable and stimulating background to their daily tasks. By and large, these are the people who switch off their sets, with a frown of irritation, when symphonic or chamber music starts; and they do this because such music insists upon their whole attention, which they are unable—or unwilling—to give.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*August 12th.* "Vice Versa," Episode 1 (8.30); Songs by Medtner (Oda Slobodskaya, 10.38).

August 13th. Book Talk (V. S. Pritchett, 6.45); "The Secret Mind" (9.30).

August 14th. Malcuzynski (Prom. 7.0); "Brain and Mind" (8.15).

August 15th. "The Atom Explodes" (9.45).

August 16th. Dvorak: Sextet (3.30); Martinu: Memorial to Lidice (7.10); "Sunbeams in His Hat" (11.3).

August 17th. "An Englishman Looks at Norway" (8.15); Poetry Promenade (11.45).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"The True Glory," at Warner's and Odeon
"Mr. Skeffington," at Warner's
"Week-end at the Waldorf," at the Empire
"Broken Dykes," M.O.I. Monthly Release

Films, good, bad and indifferent, have been offered to us lately in the name of Anglo-American understanding. A suspicion of *entente cordiale* did not prevent Mr. Asquith's *The Way to the Stars* from giving a true and touching picture of an aerodrome changing hands between allies; indeed, its merit lay in an appreciation, friendly but caustic, of differences in national temperament. I remember the unreticent Yank making a scene in a stuffy hotel dining-room, the North-country bore with funny stories, the manageress with a hard stare and an unsuspected love life; and, for very different reasons, I haven't yet forgotten the idiotic peer and the cosy corners of Mr. Wilcox's *I Live in Grosvenor Square*. To make this legendary nonsense more "authentic" Hollywood had imported English actors and an English director. An out-of-date but still staunch-hearted old country, ruled by the tradition of the amateur, is perhaps the only England Americans really understand, although this view must have had a nasty jolt from the Election. Visions of the true-blue will have to be supplemented in future with a dash of red; not so impossible, perhaps; the rose-gathering stationmaster will turn out to be a convinced Trade Unionist, Dukes will retire to timbered cottages, and in romance there will be opportunity for all under sixty. Plenty of room for sentimental prejudice.

But here in the meantime is a film that magnificently creates understanding. *The True Glory*, directed jointly by Carol Reed and Garson Kanin, and filmed by British and American service film units, tells the full story of the invasion of Europe. Probably no other campaign—it begins with Teheran and ends with the meeting of East and West in Berlin—has been so ruthlessly covered; thirty-four cameramen, it is said, gave their lives in making it. The result is the most packed and vivid documentary of the war. Its detail is incomparable: the fleets approaching Normandy on D-Day, the landings, Mulberry, the pipe-line, the air bombardment of the enemy in the pocket, the dash to Paris and Brussels, the crossing by the single Rhine bridge, the progress through flattened towns to the final goal. One never stops to think whether one has seen any of it before in news snippets, and most of the material, I believe, is fresh; especially in those phases when the machine hesitated—the Nazi attempt to break through at Avranches, the tragic descent on Arnhem, and the snow-bound winter months broken by Von Rundstedt's offensive. The plan of campaign, the setbacks and surprises are made very clear. An entirely new dimension, however, has been added to spectacle by the sound-track, which gives us brief first-person narratives from soldiers of all kinds taking part in battle. We never see the speakers but their accents bring nearer and pin down the sometimes terrifying scenes we are witnessing. These voices are personal, abrupt, circumstantial, sometimes humorous, never (thank goodness!) symbolic. The film attempts yet a third dimension with its interleaving of formalised maps and blank-verse narrative. This, if you don't look or listen too closely, may be vaguely ennobling. But it wasn't necessary, and, though it may set off racy colloquialism, the device fails—not, however, enough to spoil the film. The incisive direct speech of General Eisenhower's prologue would have been a far more fitting model than the less inspired narrative portions of Shakespeare's *Henry V*. However, as I've said, it isn't badly done, and it doesn't in the end very greatly matter.

Mr. Skeffington is a saga of the heyday and decline of a society beauty (Miss Bette Davis), roughly from 1900 to 1944, which I found infinitely tedious. Miss Davis pitches her voice several tones higher than usual to convey empty-headedness, but skilful though her performance is the film remains as empty as its central character. I preferred the grand-hotel pranks of *Week-end at the Waldorf* (Ginger Rogers, Walter Pidgeon, etc.) which manages to be starry and yet fairly lively. Should have liked more of Benchley's brochure on hotel life behind the scenes.

This month's M.O.I. release shows us Walcheren before and after the bombing of the dykes. After centuries the island is once more part of the North Sea; it will take three years to free the soil (some of the richest in Holland) from salt water. Pathetic scenes often beautifully photographed, of this hard, cheerful people evacuating in ducks and boat trains.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

Look how her close defences laddered like
A stocking, knee to toe ran suddenly
In one lean stroke, flawed and flowed like water
Crowding the tiny breach in some tall dyke
And zipping open a Zuyder Zee
Of privacy. What does it matter
If she lay passive and refused to strike?

For when the flying hare, her breast mud-beaten,
Hears the hounds gain and give tongue greedily
A field away, and feels their huddled thud
Thundering and darkening the ground before her,
How her breath leaves her, and her feet connive,
And hungry eyes let go their hold of home,
And all her heart is lifted up from her,
No longer arguing, agreeing now
With her devoted and devouring fate;
And, floating out upon the wind, her cry
Circles the scene with careless quisling eye.

So this doomed woman, hounded and brought low,
Wheels round and meets her captor toe to toe
And face to face. Deep in the other's eyes
She sees herself, and smiles, a solemn mime
There in the mirror where her halves embrace
And consummate the marriage of the chase.

For, from that last and zero tower of Time,
Lifted above herself her heart can see
The self that followed and the self that fled
(Through all the long and round about of days)
Closing the circle irremediably
Of life and death; in one brief binding gaze:
And in the awful night of pain long-drawn
Rises a conflagration of peace, a bloody dawn.

W. R. RODGERS

Correspondence

INDISCRIMINATE

SIR,—The announcement of the "atomic bomb" and the tone in which that announcement was made make me feel that we are entitled to ask whether the Allies are committed from now on to the indiscriminate extermination of the whole Japanese civil population and, if so, whether the British Labour Party endorses that policy.

It seems to me that a party or a people which is prepared to condone or applaud the annihilation at a single blow of a city of 300,000 inhabitants has reached a level of irresponsibility without historical parallel. Even if we allow for the exaggeration of early reports, the failure of English liberal thought to dissociate itself immediately from such actions, and to demand their immediate end, is likely to cover us with well-merited disgrace in the eyes of history and of every sane contemporary.

Havengore, Tudor Road, ALEX. COMFORT
Barnet, Herts.

INDIAN PRISONS

SIR,—Mr. D. M. Sen's reply to my protest against his letter in your issue of July 14th, ignores my main point, namely, that his letter was so worded that an uninformed reader in this or any other country would inevitably conclude that the British authorities were responsible for the prison atrocities he alleges and that Indians were the helpless victims, though he must know well that actually, if his story is true, responsibility rests on Indian Provincial Governments. As to the truth or falsity of his charges, it is for the India Office to ascertain the facts, and whoever is responsible for that office in the new Parliament will have an early opportunity of making the truth known.

26, Hampstead Lane, ELEANOR F. RATHBONE
N.6.

SIR,—Both Mr. Quinton and Mr. Frenchman claim that my instances may have "truth in them," but that they are "exceptions." They were drawn from my own experiences in Bengal, but I had no difficulty in substantiating them by quoting similar cases from the Government reports of *another* province. This itself proves that my instances were in no way exceptional. At any rate, they establish a *prima facie* case for an investigation. In fact, they are, as I have said before, quite typical and any Indian could cite similar instances, were it not for the perennial fear admirably expressed by an adaptation of Miss Rathbone's couplet:

"Dear God, make me dumb,
Lest I to Hijli come."

Mr. Quinton says, "Visitors, official and non-official, have access to every prisoner." To take but one example, Berhampore Special Jail has no non-official visitor. We would not have known this but for the accidental leakage of the news, *three months after its occurrence*, of the sudden and violent death of "Security Prisoner, Ananta Pandey; Period of detention: Indefinite," as he was officially described (vide Beng. Ass. Proceedings, 28/3/1944). The Andaman I believe, have no visitors at all. Official visitors are usually police officers and Magistrates, who are mere instruments of Government policy.

Mr. Quinton further asserts that the "powers of Special Magistrates would be strictly defined by law and subject to appeal or review by the High Court." In fact, Special Magistrates can summarily send any one to any of our dreaded prisons, even without hearing any evidence, for a period of two years without any review from any quarter at all. Even if they should bias or conduct themselves in a way which would under the ordinary law justify the High Court to transfer the case from their jurisdiction, it cannot do so (vide Govt. of Ind. Ord. II, 1942). They can summarily fine anyone up to any amount (vide Criminal Fines Ord., 1942). They, and even the regular police officers, can arrest anyone as a Security Prisoner without the prior knowledge or subsequent approval of the Provincial Government (vide Def. of India Rule 129). This is surely "uncontrolled authority," a phrase which is in no way an exaggeration. Kan

khya Sen was chosen to exercise it apparently for his "great courage." But why was a Sub-Deputy Magistrate singled out for such honours, and promoted over three or four rungs of the official ladder all at once? For reasons of space, I cannot go into details. But I think an impartial inquiry into his career may very well show that he richly deserves to be classed in the same category as the Belsen "beast." He was moreover one of a class, as Mr. Quinton himself admits. People with a cruel record are thus sought out and given high posts in the Indian police and prison departments.

Indiscriminate whipping, lathi charge, penal or starvation diet for months on end, bar-fetters which prevent one from sitting down, all these are allowed in our "humane" Jail Code. The system of promoting criminals to be prison officials, who thus can flog "politicals," is also approved. Criminals get generous remission for whipping politicals, again according to our "humane" prison system. If the spectacles of any prisoner accidently get cracked or need replacement for any other reason, he may not get another pair at all, if he cannot himself afford it. But if he can do so, it will still take him about two months to get a replacement. Blind as he may be without his glasses, he still must stumble and work or invite the horrors of the whipping triangle. Where a code gives express authority to prison officials to inflict severe corporal punishments, as and when they please, without any judicial or quasi-judicial procedure, it is inevitable that the vilest forms of cruelty will be perpetrated under its cover.

So long as the Indian Police Service and the I.M.S. officers who are usually Prison Superintendents, are appointed by the Secretary of State and can be disciplined only by him no Provincial Ministry will ever be able to control them. I could cite instances of callous disregard by police and prison officials of Government and even High Court instructions. The feeling of having uncontrolled authority leads one to commit cruelties. To remove that feeling, a totally new allegiance and local set-up and a new mental atmosphere will be needed. With a Labour Government in power we may expect quick and decisive action in this respect. All Indians hope that the Andamans, as they are freed, will not be used as a penal settlement again. We also hope that stern justice will be meted out to those found guilty of atrocities in prisons or police lock-ups after proper investigation. As you have pointed out, there is enough preliminary evidence to justify an official investigation. Its very announcement will have a sobering effect.

D. M. SEN

16, Turl St., Oxford.

STERILE INTERCOURSE

SIR,—Prompt reference was made in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION to the "Sterile intercourse" nullity appeal of the 16th July. This rules that refusal by a husband to have intercourse otherwise than by coitus interruptus or using a sheath amounts to refusal to consummate the marriage. Previously penetration was always regarded as sufficient.

The decision does not mean that mere sterility gives rise to a right to set aside the marriage, it merely means that a marriage is not fully consummated until intercourse has taken place without mechanical contraception. I say this because the Court used the phrase that "transmission of semen must have taken place"; presumably this means transmission to a place where, if active, it could fertilise, and this would be prevented by the use of a cap by a woman. Counsel for the wife conceded that marriage would be consummated if a wife were to remove the semen by douche. The various methods of poisoning semen before contact with an ovum is effected were not apparently referred to.

The following important results, *inter alia*, would seem to follow:—

(1) The indulgence in such sterile intercourse by married persons outside marriage is not adultery, e.g. a new defence to divorce proceedings is available.

(2) Such familiarity would not be unchastity, e.g. to stop a war-widow receiving a pension, or to terminate a right to maintenance.

(3) A loophole to marriage by mutual consent is available if one party has refused to discard contraception.

Of course the law is not logical and the House of Lords may think the Court of Appeal has gone too far, but it is interesting that Lord Merrivale by his decisions giving a wide interpretation to "discretion," in effect changed and brought the divorce law more nearly up to the morality of the day. This new case may have similar effect.

7 New Square, W.C.2. AMBROSE APPELBE

FOREIGN DOCTORS

SIR,—I see in the Press that the *Medical World* urges the Government to take steps against the settlement of foreign doctors in this country, who are said to have "infiltrated" into the profession after obtaining British qualifications.

This attempt to exclude competition by the paper of a body whose assembled members cheered when the defeat of Sir William Beveridge in the election was announced is the more reprehensible in view of the grave shortage of doctors. As far back as 1941 we had to ask for a loan of 1,000 doctors from the U.S.A.; all doctors claim to be overworked and regulations about wartime study will make for a reduced replacement of trained men for years even when demobilisation is complete.

The B.M.A. bears at least part of the responsibility for a large proportion of these doctors working as civilians. Early in the war many of them volunteered for the Army, but were under the then existing regulations drafted into the Pioneer Corps. As they were not permitted to become officers, and the B.M.A. for reasons of prestige vetoed the employment of doctors amongst the other ranks in a professional capacity, transfer to the R.A.M.C. would have been useless. In this dilemma the Government with the approval of the B.M.A. urged these men to return to civil life to free British doctors for service in the Forces.

To turn on them now with the accusations quoted in the Press smacks of restrictive practices, is against the interest of the general public and gratuitously insulting into the bargain.

94, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1. EDGAR HESS

THE YOGI AND THE COMMISSAR

SIR,—Since no one has answered Mr. Karl Polanyi's letter about *The Yogi and the Commissar*, and Mr. Koestler is himself abroad, it seems desirable to make the following comment. Persons aged 12 years are subject to the death penalty in the U.S.S.R. if found guilty of banditry. Mr. Polanyi himself agrees that this is so, "hypothetically." The only necessary hypothesis is that the child should commit the crime of banditry. No statistics are available as to the number of children, if any, executed under the law. The fact remains that the Soviet law imposes the death penalty at a much lower age than does the law of other countries.

Burnt Oak, Kidlington, Nr. Oxford. JOHN R. BAKER

THE LONDON POLES

SIR,—I have not sufficient information to discuss the financial questions raised in the article "Bureaucracy in Exile" in your issue of July 28th, though I cannot but regard them as ungenerous to an Ally the value of whose services in many fields none of us can dispute, and whose sufferings have been far greater than ours. But may I deprecate strongly the doubt expressed as to how much of the expenditure on "the underground army and political movement" was really used in the furtherance of war against the Germans," and the reference to the "now

HEINEMANN

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admitted misdirection of much of the underground in an anti-Soviet campaign"?

Has the writer forgotten the sabotage for four or five years of, it is estimated, one-third of the German supply trains, work in which not only men but women of the underground joined, and the amazing fight carried on for nine weeks by semi-armed men and women in Warsaw against an army equipped with all the latest weapons?

Does he realise that from the day the Russian army entered Eastern Poland, men of the underground had come out, on the orders of their exiled government, to help to drive the Germans out? And though too often rewarded with arrest or deportation if they would not join the army of the Lublin administration or the Russian army, one learned only this week from Dr. Litauer in the *News Chronicle* that even when made desperate by an order issued on January 17th for their extirpation (reported at the time in our press), they had refused to join the Germans in fighting the advancing Russian army?

If British prisoners of war were free to say in public what several have said in private, British people would be better able to realise the fear which the Poles have inspired in the Germans by their ceaseless and daring warfare.

As to the "admitted misdirection in an anti-Soviet campaign," does the writer really think that political leaders engaged in such a campaign would have allowed their names to be revealed to the Russian authorities as was permitted by the fifteen arrested delegates at the request of our Government?

KATHARINE ATHOLL

Chairman, British League for European Freedom.
79 Gloucester Road,
London, S.W.7.

[The Duchess of Atholl is misinformed about the Polish underground movement, whose resistance was truly heroic—this journal was among the first to pay tribute to it—but never effective in seriously embarrassing the German war machine in Poland. The "misdirection" to which we referred came not from Poland but from London, where the anti-Soviet nature of the wireless instructions is no longer denied by any informed person. The Duchess of Atholl seems not to have read the article by Stefan Litauer (*News Chronicle*, July 30th), to which she refers. Mr. Litauer states that these men of the Polish underground "carried out many terrorist activities against the Russians and the Lublin Poles," that they retreated "with the Germans without any threat from the Wehrmacht" and "negotiated with the Germans for safe conduct through the German lines."—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

"SWIATPOL"

SIR,—As Editor of the Polish Press Agency *Swiatpol* I should appreciate it very much if you would kindly publish my statement relating to an extract from the article entitled "Bureaucracy in Exile," published in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION on July 28th. The said extract reads: "Anti-Russian propaganda among the troops is being conducted as violently as ever by a press agency called Swiatpol."

In this connection, I should like to stress the following points:—

1. The Polish Press Agency *Swiatpol*—which started its work a few years ago—does not carry on any kind of anti-Russian propaganda.

2. Our Agency is interested exclusively in internal Polish affairs; problems of national life, Polish culture and education. All our bulletins are published in the Polish language, for the use of the press edited in Polish communities abroad—the latter numbering about 6 million people of Polish extraction scattered in many countries of Europe and America. Approx. 150 periodicals and dailies, printed in Polish, are being edited in these countries. Besides press bulletins for adult readers, we publish also a special weekly bulletin destined for children and youth living in Polish communities abroad and in Polish war refugee centres. Lately, the Agency's activities have been considerably reduced.

3. It has never been our object to provide Polish military units with any kind of publications; in fact, we do not maintain any permanent contact with Polish troops, except a few soldier-volunteers from Polish communities abroad. I feel obliged, therefore, to declare most emphatically that the statement about our Agency "conducting an anti-Russian propaganda among the troops as violently as ever" is basically untrue, and betrays some hidden tendencies, entirely unfounded by real facts.

38, Wilton Crescent,
S.W.1.

BOLESLAW WIERZBIANSKI
Editor of the Polish Press Agency "Swiatpol."

[*Swiatpol* was orignally a publicity agency of the "Association of Poles Abroad." This organisation was founded in the late 'twenties to do propaganda among Polish minorities abroad. *Swiatpol*, re-established during the exile of the London Poles, apparently continues the old tradition of the Association. Its field of activity is now mainly Great Britain and France. It provides most of the editors of the Polish papers abroad. To prove our point about anti-Soviet propaganda, it is only necessary to examine the bulletins of this press agency. Owing to the fact that the Polish Ministry of Information has formally ceased to exist, a part of its activities are now transferred to *Swiatpol*. Its bulletins are sent to newspapers edited specially for Polish troops; sometimes by error its contributions have actually appeared with the signature of the agency. We note that the editor, while saying that it is not his object to provide military units with education, does not deny that his troops actually receive material supplied by *Swiatpol*. We are informed that Mr. Wierzbianski is also a leading member of *Independence and Democracy*, which works closely with the *British League for European Freedom* of which the Duchess of Atholl is Chairman.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

P.R. IN UNIVERSITY SEATS

SIR,—Surely "Critic" is in error in his belief that under "normal election methods," Priestley would have been comfortably elected as an M.P. for the University of Cambridge. Under so-called "normal" conditions in a two-member constituency two choices would have been counted for each elector, instead of only one as under P.R. The recorded result of the redistribution of Pickthorn's surplus shows that 4,080 of his supporters made Wilson Harris their second choice, while only 313 of them would have had votes recorded for Priestley. It seems clear that in this particular case, P.R. made no difference to the final result.

ALLAN G. B. FISHER

Oxford.

RT. HON. H. G. MIDGLEY

In our issue of the 27th day of November, 1943, we published a letter from Jack MacGougan, a Northern Ireland correspondent, in which statements were made concerning the Rt. Hon. Harry C. Midgley, until his recent resignation a member of the Cabinet of the Government of Northern Ireland. Mr. Midgley has complained that these statements exceed the limits of legitimate statement and comment and were untrue and defamatory.

The letter referred to was published in pursuance of our policy of opening our columns to correspondents who wish to deal with matters of public interest. We were not vouching the truth or fairness of the statements and comments made in the letter referred to and we certainly did not intend to make any allegation against the good character and reputation of Mr. Midgley. We wish to apologise to Mr. Midgley for publishing the letter, and to assure him that in publishing it we were not actuated by any malice or personal feeling of any kind.

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ROUTLEDGE

BOOKS IN GENERAL

PAUL VALÉRY, who died in Paris on the morning of July 20th, 1945, was perhaps the most sheerly, certainly the most obstinately, intelligent of poets. This master-quality of intelligence was turned altogether inwards—in upon the poet himself and upon the tiny cherished residue, the two or three words around which a long poem such as *La Jeune Parque* would later be swaddled; *La Pythie*, for instance, was on his own admission built up from the single phrase: "Pâle, profondément mordue." Sometimes he went so far as to identify Poetry with Intelligence, to apostrophise her as

—O ma mère Intelligence
De qui la douceur coulait

and to speak of himself as lapped in the deep-sea wave of her laden heart. So far from stalking the reader, or in any way courting his attention, Valéry saw him as an intruder, whose importunity cut short the otherwise endless procedure of composition and forced the poet to publish his work, not indeed in finished state, but in abandoned state. He was indifferent even to the secret inner company of readers whose judgment, in his view, forms in each era the true standards of worth. The writing of his poems was, in fact, nothing less than a private exercise in the reformation of the poet's self—"une exercice plutôt qu'une action, une recherche plutôt qu'une délivrance, une manoeuvre de moi-même plutôt qu'une préparation visant le public." In a tribute of courteous bafflement, paid during the Taylorian lecture of 1927, H. A. L. Fisher quoted in respect of Valéry the lines in which Coleridge said of a poem by Wordsworth that it "was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost nature . . ." But Valéry's poems, though inaccessible by most of the normal approaches to poetry, offer in return the highest degree of intellectual excitement. Not lightly did he take for his blazon, when still very young, the device of Leonardo da Vinci—"ostinato rigore."

Valéry was born at Sète on October 20th, 1871. His father was a customs official, descended from a family of Corsican navigators; his mother Italian, and from Genoa. Poets have rarely so rejoiced in their childhood as did Valéry in the animation of the small port of Sète, set between the Mediterranean and the Canal du Midi. Thenceforth a terrace or balcony overlooking a harbour seemed to him the best point of vantage in the world; and as a boy the busyness of the port, contrasting with the giant complaisance of Nature in Languedoc, symbolised for him "le travail volontaire, et comme rebelle, de notre race." Best of all sights were the fabulous men-of-war, the *Colbert*, the *Trident* and the *Amiral Duperré*. These arresting objects, with their thickets of masts, important funnels and fat, blunt cannon, so ate into his mind that, but for a then ungovernable weakness in mathematics, he would have made his career in the Navy. This inherited love of ships is reflected in the titles (*Rhumbs* and *Le Log-Book*) of two of his works; as for the Mediterranean itself, one need only recall the images with which *Le Cimetière Marin* begins, and which Mr. Cecil Day Lewis has recently so admirably rendered:

This quiet roof, where dove-sails saunter by,
Between the pines, the tombs, throbs visibly.
Impartial noon patterns the sea in flame—
That sea for ever starting and re-starting.
When thought has had its hour, oh how rewarding
Are the long vistas of celestial calm!

From his mother, Valéry gained above all the experience of Genoa, a dream-city which haunted him always as the symbol of an ideal splendour, the city of Semiramis, a vision in which "l'architecture du décor, les profils de la terre, la perspective des eaux, se composent comme la scène d'un théâtre où ne viendrait agir, chanter, mourir parfois, qu'un seul personnage: la Lumière!" He always regretted that Genoa had never found its Canaletto, or its Guardi; two small paintings by Corot did little to make up for this, and he was childishly pleased when Claudel, for example, was in his turn dazzled and carried away by its beauty.

Valéry as a young man was open to influence, and he sometimes esteemed even those authors who differed absolutely from himself. He liked dining, for instance, with Meredith at Box Hill. A friend of Marcel Schwob and Pierre Louys, he was made welcome (and rebuked for his supposed idleness) by Heredia. Huysmans, fantastically particular in his choice of companions, would seem to have appraised Valéry correctly at their first meeting. But Valéry prized most those authors and painters in whose practice he found some part of his own belief. As a student, he fell upon Viollet-le-Duc's dictionary of architecture, and with it nourished his passion for this, "the most finished, the most *total* of the arts." It is difficult for English-speaking readers to accept the "vertiginous and mathematical opium" of Poe at its French price; but to Valéry, who invented this phrase when he was twenty, the *Eureka* had the force of an intoxicant. He was then at Montpellier, where science, as he later remarked, was taught in terms of "the faucet and the siphon" rather than according to Newton and Laplace; from this he was emancipated by Poe. The ideal of scientific research, which he was so soon to transfer to the realm of poetry, meanwhile caused him to dismiss all less solidly founded beliefs; he never, for example, forgave Flaubert for saying that "anything which exalts me in a vague way is what I call Beautiful."

Leonardo is, of course, the artist to whom Valéry owed most. His universal and methodical curiosity, his intelligence so perfectly detached that it assumes at times an attitude "of pure instability"—these are traits which Valéry coveted for himself; his notebooks, too, have been compared to those of the great Florentine. His affinity with Degas has been less often remarked. The idea of Degas had, however, so borne upon Valéry's mind, before their first meeting, that it had served as one of the models for his Monsieur Teste—a monster of intelligence and disillusionment. Degas shared, moreover, Valéry's belief that work was never finished; it could only be abandoned at one stage or another. For him, too, composition was the result of endless study and repeated technical soundings; and Valéry was enthralled to find that Degas would base a landscape upon the chance alignment of a handful of coke upon his work-table—"a very Vincian idea," he noted. Drawing, too, was a supreme test of intelligence. Throughout this period Valéry, though outwardly inactive, was working to marshal and perfect his powers. He would spend hours daily before a blackboard, toiling at mathematical problems: "Prosody is also a kind of algebra," he once remarked. He had in mind nothing less than a re-birth of language—one which would achieve for poetry a miracle analogous to that achieved in science by the ancient Greeks; many years later, he spoke at Zurich of the obstinate subtlety with which the Greeks had reshaped the improbable tools of common speech into the precision instrument of scientific usage. With comparable daring he set out to remodel the language of poetry. He had certain pointers in mind: architecture, for instance, with its stubborn transmuting of disorder into order, and its firm passage from the arbitrary to the inevitable. He had also certain antitheses in mind—the senseless chaos of opera, for instance, and the "almost inconceivable" art of the novel. Baudelaire had said that all great poets end up by becoming critics; Valéry reversed the process. Inestimably the most important single incident in his life was his friendship with Mallarmé. His friend Valéry Larbaud has described the "intimate revolution" which, early in the Nineties followed their first meetings; and some fifty years later Valéry wrote, as so often before, of how his master had striven, not by any cult of inspiration but by prolonged and wilful reflection, to "repenser, comme s'il en revivait, à soi seul[e] l'innombrable invention, le Langage; et, se plaçant dès lors à une altitude de vue où personne avant lui n'avait même songé à s'établir, il s'est maintenu jusqu'à son dernier jour en intime contemplation d'une vérité dont il ne voulait communiquer que de prodigieuses applications, pour preuves." It was for this ideal that Valéry too had a "lucid, savage and implacable preference"; and in pursuit of it, the mad harmonium of Hugo gave place to the solitary flute-of Debussy's *Syrinx*, or the music of Gluck which persisted in Valéry's head while he was composing *La Jeune Parque*. In admiring Valéry the hierophant it is possible to exaggerate the difficulty of his work. Often the verse has the directness of Racine, or of the early *Adonis* of La Fontaine which Valéry so much preferred to "those deadly Fables, with their false rusticity." Valéry had a Mediterranean eye, and his images present a continual dream of beauty—a dream of the kind which, as he said, "can be written down only by someone who is infinitely awake." There can never have been a more exactly sensuous poet than the author of *Ebauche d'un Serpent*.

Long pauses separated the appearance of his poems—pauses due sometimes to wilful abstention, sometimes to illness or domestic cares. As he grew older, public affairs began to claim him; he lectured in Brussels and Madrid, Oxford and Rome. He worked for the League of Nations; Mussolini consulted him about the relations of poets to the State. In 1925 he was elected a member of the Académie française; and in place of the normal eulogy of his predecessor, Anatole France, he delivered an eloquent reproach for what he considered to have been a betrayal of the language and a debasement of its aims. Shortly after, in replying to Marshal Pétain's inaugural speech as Academician, he displayed an uncommon grasp, not only of warfare, but of its significance and of the unnatural calm ("cette extrême conscience, cette longue et lucide veille") which sometimes precedes it. Political life was, almost by definition, uncongenial to him; but he missed little of what was happening, as one may judge from the article on German aggression which he wrote in 1894 for W. E. Henley's *New Review*, or the *Crise de l'Esprit* of 1923, with its warning that Europe might soon become a mere promontory upon the great mass of Asia; and he remarked at the same period that "Europe is palpably ambitious of being governed by an American commission." Such an infra-red vision made for bouts of nervous depression, in which the *tædium vitæ* took physical shape; but no analogous clouding mars the perennial amber of his verse and prose. One may indeed say of Valéry, as of few modern poets, that it is impossible he should have done better the things he set out to do. Himself the coeval, within a year or two, of Rouault, Bonnard, Matisse and Gide, he, like them, added lustre to France; and one might choose for an epigraph to his life's work this other strophe from *Le Cimetière Marin*:

Oh, for myself alone, mine, deep within
At the heart's quick, the poem's fount, between
The void and its pure issue, I beseech
The intimations of my secret power.

Nor can one easily picture unloosed the chain which, as he once told the schoolchildren of Sète, bound the heart of this great poet to the warm and busy harbour of his native town.

JOHN RUSSELL

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THE LAST MAN OUT

The Promise Hitler Kept. By STEFAN SZENDE. *Gollancz.* 10s. 6d.

A couple of years ago a Polish Jew called Ziegelbojm appeared at a summer school in England and, in a quiet voice, told how hundreds of thousands of Jews were being gassed in extermination camps. The audience listened impatiently. What were the credentials of this outlandish person, wearing his coat like an opera cloak, who kept looking over his shoulder at the door, and who claimed to have travelled through Germany? Ziegelbojm said that he had photographs of the Nazi mass-murder, but that the London editors wouldn't print them as they were too horrifying and, in any case, seemed to them like last-war propaganda pictures. The audience thanked him; they wanted to dance. The first Jew out of Hitler's Poland went back to his Bayswater bed-sitting-room and killed himself.

The last Jew out of Hitler's Poland, Adolf Folkmann, escaped to Sweden, and told his story to Stefan Szende. *The Promise Hitler Kept* is a second-hand narrative, a *vie romancée* with all the little irritations introduced by an author who wants to decorate bare statement. The people in the story "sit as though petrified," "sob like children," "snore with their mouths open," and do all the other things which the author thinks that they ought to have done. But the gew-gaws and flummeries of Folkmann's Stockholm interpreter cannot hide the sombre shape of martyrdom which this book outlines. When the soldier in Patrick Gordon Walker's Belsen broadcast said, "I'm a British soldier, and what I say is not propaganda," he made us feel, at last, that the vermin, the corpses, and the jackboots of the concentration camps were not a far-off nightmare, but a reality within our touch. The last Jew from Poland will benefit from the credence which was denied to the simple and unhappy Ziegelbojm.

A fault of the democracies was not to take Hitler at his word. On January 30th, 1942, he said, "The result of the war will be the destruction of Jewry." The Jews, he claimed, wanted to destroy the Aryan peoples; therefore, they themselves must be destroyed. Szende describes how one Jew saw first the decimation, then the extermination, of one Jewish Community, the Community of Lemberg or Lvov. The Nazi technique had a simple pattern; first, make the Jew into the image of the devil you allege him to be, then destroy the devil. Deprive the Jew of soap and clothing; then say he is filthy and ragged. Starve him; then say that he is of inferior physique. Infest him with vermin in a ghetto; then call him diseased. Hunt him; and charge him that he has a hunted look. Hedge him with special regulations; then declare him a criminal, till, at last, he commits the ultimate offence of being alive at all. In Lvov the Jews went through these degrees of moral and physical destruction. They hoped, at first, that the murders and beatings-up on the bridge outside the town and in the sandpits were the familiar pogrom. That, at least, had an end. But they were mistaken. This time the pogrom was not a storm but the icy climate of modern mass-murder. The Orthodox Jews with the caftans and earlocks were the first to die in the *abattoir* of Belzec. Then followed the Jewish workers, rushed to the incinerating chamber as the war drew to an end. Hitler wanted at least one great victory. But when the chimneys of Belzec puffed away the last of the smoke from the dead there were still Jewish survivors to mourn their brethren and deny Hitler a dying triumph.

Why did Hitler fail to consummate his most spectacular crime—the crime against a people which was also the sin against human personality?

With another year at his disposal, he would certainly have exterminated the Jews of Europe by scientific devices, as he proposed to obliterate London. Why he failed to get that extra year's grace is suggested by *The Promise Hitler Kept.* The Nazi system was corrupt; its high officials were as venal as its lower officials. Even in slave-labour they engaged in a black-market. Even a hounded Jew could buy a few days' respite if he could find the money. The Nazi State machine had become a thing of forms, permits and passes. Among the Nazis themselves the habit of pillage, of violence, of command and obedience, had ruined any real sense of community. The *Volksgemeinschaft* had become a slogan without sense.

Folkmann was able to join the Todt organisation, work his way to Norway, and from there make his escape. Nowhere in Germany or Poland had he found a glimmer of charity, except from a Uniate priest in Lvov. Hitler's attack on the Christian tradition had succeeded; in its place was a desperate *sauve qui peut* in which Fascist Ukrainians and Poles had shown themselves as willing in savagery as any German.

The Promise Hitler Kept is a valuable reinforcement to those who believe that the political and economic resettlement of Europe is not enough to guarantee sanity, let alone peace. Europe must be re-educated: and that means it must be re-converted to the Christian ethic.

MAURICE EDELMAN

DEATH AND THE POET

The Collected Poems of Sidney Keyes. Edited with an Introductory Memoir and Notes by MICHAEL MEYER. *Routledge.* 7s. 6d.

"A man dies many times," wrote Yeats. Many times, yet even so dread of death does not take account of the facts; if it did, the motor car and the 'flu germ would be among our legendary enemies of whom we dream in childhood. The imagination discounts such risks, emptying them of meaning, in order to make more calamitous the ritual drama of war. Twice in forty years humanity has united to render this sacrifice of itself, with every circumstance of barbarism and finality; and it may be that to a future historian our epoch will seem less a time of thwarted conquests than of a dominant will, never before so nakedly expressed, towards self-destruction. Germany was the weapon; one attempt had mauled, the second surely would make an end. So it was that Europe was prepared for this second blow in everything except defence. The weapon had been tested in China and Spain; we were ready to stand, to suffer the worst; Mr. Wells had added a postcript to history for the next thousand years or so; it only remained for the point to strike home. To a young man growing up *entre les deux guerres,* war was an overruling fantasy, the condition on which he fell in love and the sun rose and set. The imaginative literature of that time, as one war receded and another swung into view, shows a common obsession but a diversity of attitudes. The belated epics of cowardice—*The Good Soldier Schweik, Voyage au bout de la nuit*—told one story: that humanity had been delivered finally into the hands of the malicious and incompetent and that a man's only duty was to save his skin. At the other extreme, jauntily at times, there arose the preoccupation with death. Nowhere is this preoccupation more innate and at the same time more studied than in the poetry of Sidney Keyes.

His brief active life as a poet, from 1938 to 1943, is almost a single progression towards the death which met him in Tunisia after two weeks of battle. When he died, at twenty, he had completed one cycle of experience, and since we can only guess at further cycles there is an air of completion about his work. *The Wilderness,* though not in fact quite the last poem he wrote, forms the natural climax of his poetic achievement. Here he attains the rapt understanding aimed at all along, the vision and hardness that go beyond mere acceptance.

> Here where the horned skulls mark the limit
> Of instinct and intransigeant desire
> I beat against the rough-tongued wind
> Towards the heart of fire.
>
> So knowing my youth, which was yesterday,
> And my pride which shall be gone to-morrow,
> I turn my face to the sun, remembering gardens
> Planted by others—Longinus, Guillaume de Lorris
> And all love's gardeners, in an early May.
> O sing, small ancient bird, for I am going
> Into the sun's garden, the red rock desert
> I have dreamt of and desired more than the lilac promise.
> The flowers of the rock shall never fall.

This is a far step from the romanticism of his early poems, the "Come, sweet death" of *Nocturne for Four Voices,* written when Keyes was still at school, and even of the *Four Postures of Death,* a more mature development of the same theme. We are warned in Mr. Meyer's introduction against thinking of Keyes as "a degenerate Romantic who wooed death." Far from degenerate certainly—Keyes's thought and diction everywhere rebut that charge—but surely he began with at least a devious courtship? Death, we feel, could be for him a person, as God is to others, a person who can be approached and with whom we must come to terms—not our own terms, perhaps. The relationship is often that of a lover. Here is Keyes's own account from his diaries:

> How significant it is that Hood's ghost in *The Haunted House* is a daylight one! The Romantics raised a spectre they could not lay; it was, broadly speaking, death as a part of life, conceived in terms of sensual imagery. To the Middle Ages and the Elizabethans, death was merely the Leveller; to the 17th century, a metaphysical problem; to the 18th century the end of life. The Romantics tried to think of it as a state of existence . . .

And in a letter ascribing his beginnings to Yeats and Rilke: "those two brought back reports from a kind of Ultime Thule of Romanticism, which suggest that there is more—much more—to be discovered there." From Rilke he had taken, among other things, the idea that everyone carries his death within himself as a woman carries a child. I have only one qualification to add to Mr. Meyer's introductory essay, which is a model of informative criticism, and that is in his final assessment of Keyes. "Above all," writes Mr. Meyer, "he was the first truly English poet effectively to marry Continental symbolism to the English Romantic tradition." This would seem to suggest that Keyes had affinities with the French symbolists; I believe the influence to have been almost exclusively Germanic. When he surprises us, for example, by saying that he would have been at home as a pastoral poet in the last century, it reminds one of Coleridge subscribing to the tenets of *Lyrical Ballads* and sitting down to write *The Ancient Mariner.* Keyes was a haunted poet, who had to put his hauntings to the test.

To return to *The Wilderness*—and it is a poem to which the reader of Keyes must return again and again—the quality of its verse startles as much as its triumphant courage. In Keyes's vision of the desert there is an assurance matched, in my experience, by no other poem written during the war except Mr. Eliot's *Little Gidding.*

> There is No Parting
>
> From friends, but only from the ways of friendship;
> Nor from our lovers, though the forms of love
> Change often as the landscape of this journey
> To the dark valley where the gold bird burns.
> I say, Love is a wilderness and these bones
> Proclaim no failure, but the death of youth.
> We say, you must be ready for the desert
> Even among the orchards starred with blossom,
> Even in Spring, or at the waking moment
> When the man turns to the woman, and both are afraid.
> All who would save their life must find the desert
> The lover, the poet, the girl who dreams of Christ,
> And the swift runner, crowned with another's laurel;
> They all must face the sun, the red rock desert,
> And see the burning of the metal bird.
> Until you have crossed the desert and faced that fire.
> Love is an evil, a shaking of the hand,
> A sick pain draining courage from the heart . .

The adventurer meets his Phœnix, his metal bird, in a last section of incandescent beauty, which one must read the whole poem, and indeed the whole volume, to appreciate. This is the white light towards which all the varied colours

of this poet—gaudy pheasants, the ploughman's mulberry-sleek team, the cherry orchards with France falling—have converged. Readers will tend at the moment to identify Keyes with this one poem: too restricted a view, but it is certainly his masterpiece. Here from an earlier poem, is a cool, calculated view of the journey that had to be undertaken:

> A soldier's death is hard;
> There's no prescribed or easy word
> For dissolution in the Army books.
> The uniform of pain with pain put on is straiter
> Than any lover's garment; yet the death
> Of these is different, and their glory greater.

No better epitaph of millions has been written during this war.

Let me add, for the sake of those who already possess the two earlier volumes, that these *Collected Poems* contain a number of new poems including a touchingly appropriate elegy for Virginia Woolf. The book is beautifully edited. The eight pages of Notes, with quotations from letters and diaries are a most valuable addition to our knowledge of Keyes, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Meyer or Mr. Heath-Stubbs will discover enough material in prose to make a further volume. They are very rightly, critical, even over-critical, of Keyes's reputation. With popularity comes the inevitable legend and depreciation of currency.

G. W. STONIER

ACTS OF GOD

The Elements Rage. By FRANK W. LANE. *Country Life.* 10s. 6d.

Lawyers, who always want to hold someone responsible for acts of violence, used to attribute unprovoked homicide by the forces of nature to the arbitrary behaviour of God. Such acts of God were so unpredictable that prayer, not insurance, was the only recognised resource against them. To-day we have hurricane warnings, lightning conductors and earthquake-proof buildings, but still 250 lives are lost by tornadoes and 500 by lightning in U.S.A. alone every year, while 14,000 a year die by earthquake in the world. Mr. Lane has produced a compendium of facts concerning the most savage outbursts of natural forces, coupled with the latest scientific explanation of these phenomena, written for the benefit of the unscientific in the simplest language.

The chapters of *The Elements Rage* are headed Hurricanes, Tornadoes, Waterspouts, Hail, Snow, Lightning, Meteorites, Earthquakes and Volcanoes; and concerning the feats of these nine unbridled monsters Mr. Lane is prepared to saturate the awe-stricken reader with information. All that a reviewer can do is to stimulate curiosity with a choice sample of the contents. A hurricane is a circular wind, whose average life is nine days, diameter 100 miles or more, and maximum recorded wind-velocity 230 miles an hour. Scientists believe they understand the causes of hurricanes. A tornado is also a circular wind, with a diameter from 10 feet to 2 miles, and a calculated wind-velocity of anything up to 600 miles an hour; it looks like an elephant's trunk dangling from the clouds, and it acts like a vacuum-cleaner. Chickens are plucked by it, railway engines lifted, and a house was once carried 2 miles. One scientist has listed 26 predisposing conditions for tornadoes, but no one really knows why they occur. The book contains wonderful photographs of these "prairie twisters." Waterspouts are tornadoes at work over water, but not as dangerous as on land. Frogs and fish raining from the sky are well authenticated and due to the upward suction of waterspouts.

Hailstones, there is good reason to think, can never reach a greater weight than 5 lbs. This was small comfort to the 14 Indians pounded to death by hail on Moradabad racecourse in 1888. Avalanches cause as much destruction with their mysterious wind-blast as with the snow itself. Part of an iron bridge has been tossed 150 feet *up* a hill by such a blast. The temperature of a lightning flash is reckoned at 10,000° C. It is *very dangerous* to kick a fire-ball. A child once did so; and the explosion killed eleven cows. The safest place from lightning, by the way, is in a damp grave, if you can find one.

Several billion meteorites hit the earth's atmosphere every day, most of them the size of a grain of rice. The hardness of nickel-iron alloy was discovered when trying to cut a meteorite. The enormous meteorite that exploded over Siberia in 1908 was only located by a Soviet scientist nineteen years later; it had felled 80 million conifers at a stroke.

The latest explanation of earthquakes is the Elastic Rebound Theory, but I shall leave Mr. Lane to explain the explanation. The catalogue of disasters occasioned by earthquake and volcano is fabulous; and the only use humanity has dared to make of these titanic subterranean forces is negligible. Prince Conti got a volcano to work a small steam-engine; and a professor once procured a supply of warm water out of Etna! Mr. Lane gives a fascinating description of the birth of the new volcano, Paricutin, in Mexico, two years ago. It began when an Indian, ploughing his field, saw a small hole in the ground emitting smoke; he dropped a stone down the hole to try to stop it. Six months later the volcano was 1,500 feet high and had depopulated 300 square miles.

The conclusion likely to be reached after perusing *The Elements Rage* is that the survival of the human species is itself the strangest act of God.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

A COMPOSER'S SCHOOLDAYS

A Distant Prospect. By LORD BERNERS. *Constable.* 8s. 6d.

At the beginning of this, the second part of his autobiography, the author quotes a verse from Gray's alarming *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*. Only one line is missing, and this follows, "Where once my careless childhood strayed." It is, "A stranger yet to pain!" In this lightly acidulous, pleasantly written volume of which one's only complaint is that it is much too short, Lord Berners agrees with Disraeli's celebrated estimate of schoolboys' emotions, rather than with Gray's. Tranquil, and even reassuring though these pages may seem, they remind us that our raptures and miseries are, if anything, keenest when they are our first.

The book opens with an objective, yet tender, portrait of the author's mother. She was firm in the tastes and tenets of a Victorian country lady, and regarded "literature and painting as less dangerous to me than music." Something of her uncomplicated outlook is well conveyed in an encounter with a tutor of her son's who was aspersing the "idle rich." She had already said that, on the contrary, all the rich people she knew were always very busy. "I don't count hunting, or shooting," Mr. Prout replied, "or going to parties." "Why not?" she asked.

Lord Berners went to Eton in 1897, and was removed because of ill health after only two years, when his personality was crystallising, his contemporaries were ceasing to frown upon his passion for music, and he had begun to be happy. It is remarkable that his memories of the place are not less comfortable, on the whole, than they are. But detachment and reasonableness, touched with irony, were already in him, and a knack for what he himself calls "the technique of self-preservation." He includes a number of searching miniatures of family friends and Eton personages.

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CHATTO AND WINDUS

Among the latter his Dame, whose room was strewn with copies of the *Rubaiyat*. Dr. Porter, the science master, whose exploding crucibles still deafened the school twenty years later. A. C. Benson, the only one among his instructors whose lessons were inspiring. The author believes that he left Eton knowing less than when he arrived, and "with a distaste for work itself." The gravest charge against the public school lies, probably, in its lifeless methods of teaching. Eton, however, has a gift for implanting a certain cerebral stamina—the capacity for self-education is rarer than the desire.

If his greatest private moment, at school, was his longed-for acquisition of the score of "Das Rheingold," his exterior experience was chiefly concerned with his two principal friendships. These represented the worlds, mutually antagonistic, which fascinated him then, and, as he admits, intrigue him still—the worlds of scholarship and of fashion. A classical, yet ever poignant, adolescent dilemma. First came Marston, the slovenly, highbrow, humorous, iconoclastic, secretly respectable boy. Later there was Deniston, the good-looking, shrewd, resplendently popular yet secretly disreputable boy. Armed with music, and a scope of appreciation unusual in early youth, the author resisted everyone—even these two—who would have moulded him into any one form. Already he was neither scholar nor dandy, but much of both—an agreeable combination the key to which seems lost. An equally unusual, inborn mixture of curiosity and balance saved him, moreover, from that special trap which awaits so many clever boys at elegant schools. His mother disapproved of Marston: she would certainly have smiled upon Deniston. Parents invariably encourage a son to admire and emulate the clear-eyed, well-mannered captain of the eleven, and to eschew the bespectacled, grubby school intellectual. The son struggles against his natural distaste for the captain, whom he deems a handsome dunce, but frequently the parents prevail. (Not every schoolboy can discover, like Lord Berners, that trackless, necessary path between family and friends.)

When the parents do prevail, one of two things often follows, and sometimes both. Neither wholly beneficial. The son may merely become a sedulous snob, and a cynical Tory, for the rest of his life, which possibly delights his parents. But he may also admire captains of the eleven for the rest of his life, which delights parents, somehow, less.

BRIAN HOWARD

THE CRAFTSMAN

Fifteen Craftsmen on Their Crafts. *Sylvan Press.* 12s. 6d.

This is a timely, sensible and interesting book: timely, because in the remoulding of our already machine-ridden civilisation the position of the hand-craftsman is critical. Can he survive? He can produce works of unique quality with an intimate understanding of his materials which only long experience can give, but such works need ample time in making, and are bound to be comparatively expensive. He and his fellows can provide a high standard and a reservoir of skilled workers for experiments in mass production, though design for machine-made articles must find its own values which are not those of hand-work. The Arts and Crafts Movement has been supported chiefly by well-to-do people of cultivated taste, and their purchases cannot be relied on in the future. The war absorbed craftsmen, stopped supplies of materials and swamped the whole problem with greater issues. Now the time has come for revival, and it is clear that the understanding and backing of a larger public must be gained. It was an excellent idea to ask craftsmen themselves to write on their aims and convictions.

The fifteen essays vary greatly in approach and have not been trimmed to any propaganda pattern. Some take the form of brief histories of the crafts; others give direct accounts of processes, recipes and materials. With a few exceptions they do not appear to be addressed especially to fellow craftsmen, and are commendably free from doctrinaire attitudes and theories. Mr. John Farleigh as editor contributes a spirited and sanely optimistic introduction and an article on his own craft of Wood Engraving. He points out that tradition and technique are not text-book affairs to the craftsman, but essential knowledge; in experience they become fused with his own personality to form a deeply held belief.

"This creative yet conservative force has provided the dominant motif of the book."

Mr. Bernard Leach, writing on Pottery, traces the recent evolution of the artist-craftsman as a means of defence against the materialism and insensibility to beauty of factory work, which had driven out traditional folk art. He discusses possibilities for groups or teams of people sharing convictions, responsibilities and profits, getting their satisfaction in work as well conceived and executed as possible. He thinks such artist craftsmen should be a source of creative design for mass-production, and should not hold aloof, but admits that few of them at present find they can work in close contact with machine production, and most of those who do get the worst of the bargain.

Mr. Carl F. Dolmetsch, in an essay on "Music and Craftmanship," gives a delightful account of the Dolmetsch Workshops founded by his father at Haslemere. Arnold Dolmetsch felt that the music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could only be effective if played on the instruments for which it was written. He found some lutes, viols, virginals and clavichords, but no one who could put them in sufficiently good playing order, so he set up a workshop in his attic and started for himself. "I could not tell how far an instrument was out of order when I could not play upon it, neither could I learn to play until the instrument was in good order. Gradually my craftsmanship and my musicianship reacted (he was abundantly gifted in both) until instruments were playable and my skill well advanced. Soon I had trained pupils to join me in concerted pieces." Then began the revival of many old instruments, including the ubiquitous recorder, and the invention of new actions and improvements, and the use of any modern resources that proved compatible with basic principles and the highest standards of workmanship. But Dolmetsch made it a rule that all instrument makers should play a part in the workshop orchestra—result, a complete absence of boredom, which is the usual source of workshop accidents. The whole story is full of suggestion and a perfect example of the community group of workers shaped with a clear purpose by an individual of genius. Mr. J. H. Mason writes on the so different craft of Printing an article pregnant with experience, and insists that the ideals of Morris, Emery Walker and Eric Gill "as printers were closely related to their life's ideals, and this gave intensity to their work and led them to work out the conditions of typographical perfection."

All the authors are members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, and one thinks inevitably of the volume of essays by founder-members which caused so much stir in the Eighties and Nineties of last century. An air of discovery and hope animated their pages with a crusading spirit, and they drew largely on the example and practice of the Mediæval Guilds for support. The present essays seem by comparison to be rather pedestrian and matter-of-fact. But one remem-

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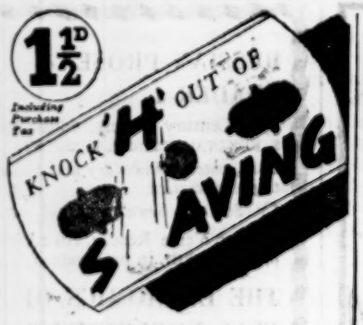

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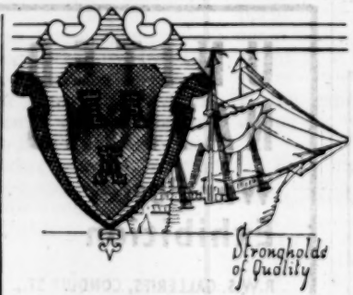

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bers that Morris, Lethaby, Cobden-Sanderson, Edward Johnston were men of at least some independent means, and many were architects. The new essayists are the working craftsmen of today who carry on influences and often the results of personal teaching from the earlier generation. But they are not mediævalists; the high value of responsible handicrafts is taken for granted. They have little enmity to the machine if intelligently controlled. They show no lack of enthusiasm in more realistic and limited hopes, but some anxiety for the future can be felt. Certainly their effort was worth making, and the book deserves a wide success. The illustrations are disappointing. Better examples should have been found in some cases, but photographs are helpless to convey a sense of the textures, touch and colour essential to stained-glass, pottery and textiles.

H. L. WELLINGTON

Week-end Competitions

No. 811

Set by Raymond Mortimer

Competitors are invited to write a proposal of marriage in not more than 16 lines of macaronic verse (*i.e.* verse containing Latin or other foreign words and English words with Latin or other foreign terminations). Entries by August 21st.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 808

Set by Prodd

The usual prizes are offered for the most arresting and (to the layman) incomprehensible passage in any kind of genuine Jargon. Slang should be avoided. The passages must be extracts from books, periodicals, textbooks or sales catalogues; and the sources must be quoted. Up to 150 words.

Report by Prodd

This competition attracted a large entry and produced a fine crop of gibberish, though many of the competitors do not seem to share my view of the distinction between Jargon and the other more or less incomprehensible forms which the English language can take. While Dialect, Slang, Cant, Archaism, Sesquipedalianism or Bureaucratic Circumlocution are primarily indications of the environment of the writer and the company he keeps, Jargon is essentially the language of precision and his understanding of it a measure of the reader's education in specialised or technical fields. The use of Jargon must always be necessary or it ceases to be Jargon and becomes Mumbo-Jumbo. There were as a matter of fact some notable entries in Mumbo-Jumbo, one competitor submitting a passage from the Athanasian creed; there were also some excellent passages in Quacks' Cant, which regretfully I had to disqualify. It is not necessary to say cranium instead of skull or maxilla instead of jaw.

In my selection from the survivors I have been influenced more by their arresting qualities than by their obscurity. I should like to print all J. R. Till's extracts from the Manual of Seamanship, but space forbids. I am sorry that he missed a memorable passage from a similar publication, "Questions and Answers," which solves the problem of whether you should surge when catting. I was also surprised to see only one quotation from Kipling who loved Jargon, and that, by no means the best that could have been found. There was no military jargon and the sporting passages were few and disappointing.

The first prize of two guineas goes to Philadelphus, not be it admitted without some misgivings on my part, since there is a marked odour of Mumbo-Jumbo in the Jargon. The rest of the prize money is divided between H. P. Paget, Granville Garley, Barbara Burton and J. R. Till. The last is included because of the enormous number of entries which he submitted, none of them quite in the first class but all of them above average and true Jargon. Proxime accesserunt J. D. Tallantire, Terry, Norman Pearson, Pretty Kitty, R. Langford, G. M. Turner, Guy Innes, L. John Edwards and Mrs. Frank Jewson.

"The field of uses of 'Is this watch leprechaun-driven?' has another dimension beside that running from the empirical to the *a priori*. For at any point on this scale the questions differ according to whether they arise because the questioner doesn't know the usage of the expressions involved in his question as well as he might or not because of this. Thus, suppose he asks because, though, the usage of 'leprechaun-driven' is *in fact* fixed so that we don't call a watch 'leprechaun-driven' but 'parrot-driven' when it sings fairy songs only after it has just heard them performed, *the questioner doesn't know this*. Then we can put him right, tell him the answer to his question. Then our conversation with him will be a conversation in logic."—From "Other Minds," by John Wisdom, article in *Mind*. "PHILADELPHUS."

"Most flip-flops have the characteristic that they will not flip satisfactorily immediately after they have flopped."—From *Time Basis*, by O. S. Puckles.

H. P. PAGET.

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J. R. TILL.

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